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THEODORE ROOSEVELT

MEMORIAL EDITION

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THE WORKS OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT

MEMORIAL EDITION

VOLUME X

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THEODORE ROOSEVELT AT TWENTY-EIGHT
AS CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONER

THE WINNING OF THE WEST

AN ACCOUNT OF THE
EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT OF OUR COUNTRY
FROM THE ALLEGHANIES TO THE PACIFIC

I

BY
THEODORE ROOSEVELT

NEW YORK
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ROOSEVELT AS PIONEER*

By Albert Bushnell Hart

What had Theodore Roosevelt to do with the winning of the West? No man of his time was more completely rooted and grounded in the Eastern part of the United States. His ancestors for generations lived on or near the seacoast. He was born in New York, educated in Cambridge, gave his first public service in Albany, lived much of his life in Washington. Why should he take it upon himself to write an elaborate account of the wresting of the frontier from Indians, Englishmen, and Spaniards? What had this cosmopolite, this universal citizen, this Dutch-Irish-English-American to do with the crude backwoodsmen who fought the Indian in the Indian's own fashion, who captured English posts and broke the barriers of Spain on the Mississippi, who builded new communities and doubled the area of their country?

Roosevelt had every right to spend years of his busy life upon the problem of westernization, because from boyhood to the end of his life he was a Western spirit and natural backwoodsman. It was not an accident that took him into Dakota any more than it was an accident that sent him to Africa. He loved the open air and big spaces and the society of wild animals. He loved mountains and mountain-lions and days of hardships, and a night camp under a tree. Above all he

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loved the spirit of freedom, the detachment from the hard-crusted habits of old communities, the relief from restraint, the release from the daily obligations of city life. It was no wonder that when his mind impelled him to choose an intellectual task that would test his powers, when he felt that he had within him the ability to make others feel the thrill of contact with nature, he turned toward a region and a period for whose history, when he began, ground had hardly been broken by systematic writers.

Roosevelt started in on this task about 1888, expecting to carry it through the Mexican War and to include an account of the whole Southwest, this side and beyond the Mississippi. Throughout the volumes are scattered illustrations, parallels, and comparisons, drawn from his experience on the northwestern frontier from 1883 to 1886. The model that he had in mind is indicated by the dedication:

This book is dedicated with his permission
To
Francis Parkman
to whom Americans who feel a pride in
the pioneer history of their country
are so greatly indebted

His problem was quite different from Parkman's; for he had to deal with a multitude of separated incidents, with the growth of scores of settlements and a great number of personalities, both aboriginal and European. The first publication was under the title "The Winning of the West and Southwest, from the Alleghanies to the Mississippi," in two volumes, published in 1889; it was 1894 before the third volume was ready, and 1896 before the fourth appeared. They were issued and reis-

sued under the general title of "The Winning of the West," in a six-volume set and a three-volume set, all with the same text.

Upon this great task Roosevelt fixed himself with all the energies of his character. He never had the special education now thought necessary for students of history; he trained himself. The first evidence of his historical insight is his earlier "History of the Naval War of 1812," a book which departed from the traditions of its period. In that work he learned how to use source material and how to reach safe conclusions. There he first found vent for his rapid and striking characterizations of men. There he projected himself at the determining events. There he gave free course to his intense desire to get to the bottom of difficult and disputed matters, to cast away the traditional wherever it interfered with the true, to see the plain citizens, public men and soldiers and sailors, not as trees walking, but as live, responsible human beings.

In preparing to write "The Winning of the West," he took great pains to search out and to use original materials; and in his prefaces and elsewhere he details his chief sources. He presents a few excurses on authorities, particularly in the Appendix to the original first volume, where he reprints some of the Indian speeches. In order to reach manuscript collections he made extensive journeys particularly in Kentucky and Tennessee. The only significant block of material which he did not reach is the Spanish archives. Since he wrote, they have been opened up to scholars; but they would have added little to his knowledge of the field within which he confined most of his work.

That chronological field is essentially the quarter-cen-

tury of taking possession, by emigrants from the Coast colonies, of the country between the watershed of the Alleghanies and the Mississippi River. He begins practically in 1765 with the first exploration of Daniel Boone, and he brings the full story down to the end of the Indian wars and the recognition by Great Britain and Spain of our northern and southern boundaries, about 1796.

The geographic field is substantially the eastern side of the Mississippi valley; for only a very small part of the action goes on along the short streams flowing into the Great Lakes. He finds in 1770 every part of this wilderness inhabited solely by wild beasts and wild men, except the upper tributaries of the Ohio, the settlements about Detroit and those around Vincennes and Cahokia. He leaves the region the home of four hundred thousand people, distributed in hundreds of settlements and organized into three States of the Union, with other territories rapidly advancing into statehood. Where in the history of mankind has so great a work of civilization been done in so short a time? What was more significant for the future of the Great Republic? What theme could more attract a mind of ceaseless vigor and a soul full of national spirit?

"The Winning of the West" is arranged in what might be called successive layers, following a chronological order of main events, but branching out sidewise into accounts of many settlements planted at different times and in different areas. The background is always the prime and aboriginal inhabitant, stalking through the woods from his town to his hunting-ground or scalping-field. No comprehensive writer has so well understood and so clearly portrayed the organization,

the character, and the habits of these numerous tribes. At least a fourth part of the space goes to describe the interminable Indian wars; and Roosevelt leaves no uncertainty as to his views of the life and the character and the obstinate resisting power of those children of nature.

He early disentangles the otherwise confused and uncertain grouping of the Southwest tribes—especially the Creeks, the Cherokees, the Chickasaws, and the Choctaws. He revels in their villages, their tilled fields, their games and dances, their crude confederations, their cattle, their slaves, their Houses of the Warriors and the Beloved Men. This was the most formidable group of natives that has lived within the present limits of the United States—four or five times as numerous as the Iroquois of that time, whom they far surpassed in carrying on continuous war.

The author knows these people sympathetically, not only because he has read the narratives of the white men who went among them, but because almost exactly a hundred years later he lived near similar Indians in the far Northwest. He excels in his sketches of some of the great leaders among them—Corn Planter the Iroquois, Logan the Mingo, Dragging Canoe the Cherokee, and McGillivray the Creek. Never in his life did Roosevelt condone an act of treachery or murder by any race. He develops the murder of the kinsfolk of Logan by worthless whites in a manner almost classic. He sees the gloom descend upon the noble chief like fate in a Greek play. He listens as man to man to Logan's appeal to his white friends. He repeats that impassioned speech to its heartbreaking ending: "Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one."

The settlers in the "Dark and Bloody Ground," and the other Southwest and Northwest regions strove against fearful Indian raids—resembling the contemporary struggles between Turk, Cossack, Pole, Swede, and Russian in Europe, abounding in surprises and killings, captures and slavery, mutilation, torture, and death. Any just account of the frontier during these thirty years is saturated with the blood of white men, women, and children. The deaths and captures of noncombatants were several thousand. Hundreds of families were broken up by a process which James Robertson described in a phrase: "I had the misfortune to see one of my children killed and uncommonly massacred." White men did not burn Indian prisoners at the stake, but not infrequently they killed unresisting men, women, and children. The shadow of the woods seemed to fall upon men's hearts with dark and ferocious influence.

On the other hand, "The Winning of the West" is a relentless demonstrator of the fateful certainty of frontier war, because the whites and the Indians were contending to the death for the territory. Roosevelt here as in other writings never fails to give testimony to the superior military qualities of the Indians over any white adversaries, except a small number of half-Indianized frontiersmen. He insists from campaign to campaign and from battle to battle that in warfare in the woods the Indians were never approached in military skill and success, whether by the regular troops of any nation, by frontier militia, or by specially trained corps. They were bothered with no commissary, no transport. They excelled in surprise. Contrary to the usual belief, they were bold and steadfast in fighting in line. It is Roosevelt's belief, stated in many different places, that no organized Indian force was ever defeated

by an inferior or equal number of whites, no matter how well equipped. The two decisive white victories in that thirty years, namely the fight at Point Pleasant in 1774 and Wayne's victory at Fallen Timbers in 1794, were both due to a superior force well handled.

Indian wars in the main arose from Indian lands, or rather from wild lands which were claimed both by Indians and by white settlers. Then and now, much baseless sympathy has gone out to the Indians as driven from their ancestral lands by the insatiable white man. Roosevelt says on that point: "There were a dozen tribes, all of whom hunted in Kentucky and fought each other there, all of whom had equally good titles to the soil, and not one of whom acknowledged the right of any other; as a matter of fact they had therein no right, save the right of the strongest. . . . The white settler . . . does not feel that he is committing a wrong, for he knows that the land is really owned by no one." On the other hand, these were lands from which the Indians drew much of their food and clothing; and in large areas, such as the permanent villages of the Creeks and Cherokees, they had a kind of homestead title.

If there be a text to "The Winning of the West," it is that the coming in of the whites was not to be stayed by any force in America. They could not remain on the wild land except in opposition to the Indians; war and war to a finish was therefore inevitable. As Roosevelt puts it: "The conquest and settlement by the Whites on the Indian lands was necessary to the greatness of the race and to the well-being of civilized mankind. It was as ultimately beneficial as it was inevitable . . . all that can be asked is that they shall be judged as other wilderness conquerors, as other slayers and quellers of savage peoples are judged." To his care-

ful account of the massacre of the Moravian Indians at Gnadenhütten, he sternly adds that no Indian tribe could expect to exist, however harmless, if it forswore self-defense. It cannot be denied that the settlers in general had no interest in attempts to civilize and Christianize the Indians. What they wanted was an Indianless Eden.

Throughout the thirty-year frontier war, the pioneer is and must be the main theme. Roosevelt loved to go back to origins, and one of the most striking things in the book is his first chapter in which he traces the earlier waves of colonization from western Europe to America, and sets forth clearly the difference between the conquest of a populous and cultured East Indies, and of a savage and thinly populated Indies of the West. Read the first chapter for the author's philosophy of the continuous westward movement into the wilderness, and the after-effects. "The fathers followed Boone, or fought at Kings Mountain. The sons marched south with Jackson to overcome the Creeks and beat the British. The grandsons died at the Alamo or charged to victory at San Jacinto."

Great skill and great familiarity with the material was necessary to separate out the different currents of emigration from the Coast colonies across the mountains. There is the Pennsylvania stream, working down through the Valley of Virginia; the contingent of seaboard Virginians and Carolinians; especially the main supply from the Piedmont and mountain regions of western Virginia and North Carolina. Men like Boone were in the first line. They sought to make homes in the heart of the forests such as they had left. They were the bone and sinew of the new communities.

Several races were represented—some Germans, some Scotch, some Scotch-Irish, a few French and Catholic Irish. Still, the original stock was mostly English, filtered through the Western section of the Southern colonies. They were an ignorant people, a backward people, "a hard people, a people who still lived in an iron age." They had no objection to scalping an enemy Indian, or to rooting out an Indian town which could not be proved to be hostile. They were a kind of Old Testament folk whose favorite tactics was "to smite them hip and thigh."

Almost lovingly does the author treat the acknowledged leaders of the westward crusaders. He notes the original explorers and scouts and Indian fighters, and keeps coming back to Daniel Boone all the way from the first settlement at Watauga to his old-age home in Missouri. He admires Kasper Mansker, the German past master in fighting and eluding the Indians. He is especially interested in those rock-hewn and imperishable men who became heads of their commonwealths. John Sevier, one-time governor of the would-be commonwealth of Franklin, and one of the main heroes of the battle of Kings Mountain, comes in over and over again. So with James Robertson, who more than any other man of his time was the captain of his community. So with George Rogers Clark, a blazing sun for years, though he went down in twilight. Andrew Jackson comes in toward the end as a young pioneer and first member of the House of Representatives from Tennessee. He polishes off Henderson and his brief independent commonwealth of Transylvania. These men come and go, weaving in and out of the texture of the narrative. You admire them, you like them, you love them. You recognize that they were of the same kid-

ney as John Smith, John Winthrop, and William Penn. Their portraits belong in the gallery of eminent Americans.

Plenty of room is found for the rank and file of the pioneers, and for their hardy wives and daughters, who raised their families and if necessary killed a few Indians who were trying to storm the fort. The settler's religion or lack of religion, his cabins, his houses, his blockhouses, the work of the trader, the service of the militia—all pass before us like a moving picture. Says a frontiersman: "I know of no scene in civilized life more primitive than a cabin hearth, such as that of my mother. In the morning, a buckeye backlog, a hickory fore-stick, resting on stone and irons, with a johnny-cake, on a clean ash board set before the fire to bake; a frying-pan, with its long handle resting on a split-bottom turner's chair, sending out its peculiar music, and the teakettle swung from a wooden lug-pole, with myself setting the table or turning the meat, or watching the johnny-cake while she sat nursing the baby in the corner and telling the little ones to hold still and let their sister Lizzie dress them."

In many ways Western frontier life was much the same as Piedmont frontier life; but there is the added element of constant danger from the Indians, and the consequent founding of settlements soon abandoned for the time. Then came the concentration of the population into regions where the backwoods people could depend upon each other. After the first fifteen years a new element arrives of people of means, some of them with slaves, who buy large quantities of land, build handsome houses, and become the magnates of the community. Such were Judge Innes, Isaac Shelby, William

Blount, and Thomas Hart, grandfather of Thomas Hart Benton.

Roosevelt, like all writers on the West, dwells on the means of travel. First, the whole company on foot; then rough bridle-paths for the pack-horses; not until after 1790, the roughest cart road. "Boone's Trace" was for many years a travelled highway to Kentucky. Note William Calk's account of a journey with Henderson's company. "I turned my hors to drive before me and he got scard ran away threw Down the Saddel Bags and broke three of our powder goards and Abram's beast Burst open a walet of corn and lost a good Deal and made a turrabel flustration amongst the Reast of the Horses Drake's mair run against a sapling and noct it down we cacht them all again and went on and lodged at John Duncan's."

It is difficult to realize that many emigrants found the shortest road to Nashborough down the Ohio to the mouth of the Cumberland and thence upstream. The narratives of the time abound in descriptions of the river journey and the dangers of Indian attack. By hollowed log and pirogue and scow and keel-boat and flatboat, thousands of people followed that water highway.

The object of going into the wilderness was to acquire land, and much of the life of the people was devoted to securing and perfecting title. "Tomahawk rights" were the only basis for a multitude of homesteads. The land companies were nearly all failures. More serious was the fundamental condition that Virginia and North Carolina insisted that the lands west of the mountains were the property of those commonwealths, which alone could confer an adequate title.

Roosevelt could not help noting how in this develop-

ment of free people on free land, setting up free institutions of their own, appeared early and unbidden the Black Spectre. During the first few years the settlers were as near the pure equality of a self-governing democracy as human nature allows. Shortly begins the division into men who have as capital only their two hands, and men who control the labor of slaves. Theodore Roosevelt was the son of a Georgia mother. He knew the Southern mind. Nevertheless, he seems never to have any doubts as to the wrongfulness of slavery. In one of his first pages he says of the European settlers in America: "They also, to their own lasting harm, committed a crime whose short-sighted folly was worse than its guilt, for they brought hordes of African slaves whose descendants now form immense populations in certain portions of the land."

Farther on, apropos of the purchase of a negro woman by Daniel Boone, he expresses his mature view of the influence of slavery on the white race: "The consciences of the majority were too dull, and from the standpoint of the white race, they were too short-sighted to take action in the right direction. The selfishness and mental obliquity which imperil the future of a race for the sake of the lazy pleasure of two or three generations prevailed; and in consequence the white people of the Middle West, and therefore eventually of the Southwest, clutched the one burden under which they ever staggered, the one evil which has ever warped their development, the one danger which has ever seriously threatened their very existence. Slavery must of necessity exercise the most baleful influence upon any slaveholding people, and especially upon those members of the dominant caste who do not themselves own slaves. . . . Slavery is ethically abhorrent to all right-minded

men; and it is to be condemned even more strongly because it invariably in the end threatens the very existence of that master caste. From this point of view the presence of the negro is the real problem; slavery is merely the worst possible method of solving the problem."

This continued pressing forward into the wilderness is much the same story as the earlier advance from the seacoast. The great difference is that the backwoodsmen, once set, forthwith began to construct little self-governing commonwealths. For the student of politics —which the author had become—the main lesson is the success of Americans detached from their accustomed governments.

Down to 1787 there were three centres of self-government in the West. First in time was the Watauga or Holston settlement. Here was founded in 1772 a community which met in convention and provided for a legislature of thirteen persons and an executive and judicial court of five persons.

The second community was Kentucky, in which several little towns grew up—such as Lexington, Harrodsburg, and Boonesborough. Just before the Revolution all the settlers went back. Shortly they returned and set up what was substantially a county government in 1776. From the first they had representation in the Virginia legislature, and before long were given the status of a county of that commonwealth.

The third permanent centre of settlement was in the bend of the Cumberland now called Nashville. On May 1, 1780, two hundred and fifty-six settlers there set up a "compact of government"—what Roosevelt calls "a little commonwealth, a self-governing state, an

absolute democracy, the majority of freemen of full age in each stockade having power in every respect, and being able not only to elect, but to dismiss their delegates at any moment."

In addition there was the temporary government of the "Legislature of Transylvania" in 1775, with its capital at Boonesborough, organized in May, 1775, with complete religious freedom, whose "fitful life flickered out of existence in 1778." More significant was the so-called state of Franklin, which lasted from 1784 to 1787 under "Nolichucky Jack" Sevier.

While these little communities were springing up, the Revolutionary War broke out on the seaboard. The Southern States, of which the new settlements were the offspring, were eventually thrown into a fierce partisan warfare. The West for the most part stood by the patriot cause; and just at the critical time, when the British troops were sweeping through North Carolina in 1780, suddenly appeared at Kings Mountain a thousand of the Western men. Under their own leaders they defeated the British army and thereby turned the current of the Revolution. The accounts of pitched battles throughout "The Winning of the West" are models of their kind. Roosevelt delights in setting straight the estimates of numbers, in describing the preliminary movements, and in bringing together from obscure sources the details of the conflict. His description of the battle of Kings Mountain in the second volume is a masterpiece of military history, searching, scrupulously fair to all parties, and laying a just emphasis on the fibre and the devotion of the Western Americans.

He takes occasion in various places to express his opinions on the use of Indians as auxiliary troops by

civilized armies. While candidly admitting that Congress in the Revolution made efforts to enlist Indians, he points out what the stirring up of the Indian tribes by the British meant to the frontiersmen. He sums up the argument convincingly in a sentence: "We have to deal, not with what, under other circumstances, the Americans might have done, but with what the British actually did; and for this there can be many apologies, but no sufficient excuse."

He also takes occasion to discuss the character of the Revolutionary militia. A man of soldierly instinct who later was a commander of American troops, he carries great weight when he says of the Western troops: "The backwoods armies were not unlike the armies of the Scotch Highlanders; tumultuous gatherings of hardy and warlike men, greatly to be dreaded under certain circumstances, but incapable of a long campaign and almost as much demoralized by a victory as by a defeat."

As an expert in the settlement of the West the author's opinion of the general relation of the new communities to the new United States of America and to the adoption of a new Constitution in 1789 must carry great weight. Here the philosopher speaks, the observer, the combiner of many factors. He renders a great service in pointing out how the Revolution bore upon the fate of the West. Nowhere is there a more vivid account of the intrepid leader, George Rogers Clark, who had the boldness to march straight into the British possessions north of the Ohio. This is one of the great adventures of history. With his hundred men and scanty means, at a vast distance from any support, he accomplished a miracle. His pluck and that of his

command, his effrontery of courage, can never be forgotten by any American.

Roosevelt makes clear how that success, and the steadfastness of the settlers south of the river, combined into an argument which could not be gainsaid by the British diplomats in the discussions over the boundary of 1782. Over and over the writer, who, one hundred years later, was to be the strongest nationalist of his time, calls attention to the truth that the frontiersman won Illinois as much as Kentucky, thus opening the road to a Northwest as big and superb as the Southwest. Over and over he points out that it was possession that gave edge to the insistence of the United States that the Mississippi was its sure boundary.

With equal skill he disentangles the relations of the period between East and West, and incidentally of North and South. The southwestern settlements were opened by individuals without the control and almost without the good-will of their parent commonwealths. The Northwest was opened by the nation, which cleared the land of the Indian power, led the way with grants and surveys and itself organized the new communities. From the acceptance of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, the West was the child of the East, which had the generous farsight to promise to the Westerners equal privileges in a common union.

At the same time appears the difficulty of governing far-distant settlements. The southwestern frontiersmen for a quarter of a century practically had their own way in matters of government. They believed in the most intimate kind of democracy. They had an instinctive dislike of superior men and superior government. Repeatedly they tried the experiment of a self-governing commonwealth. Hence it took a good ten

years after the Revolution to establish the supreme national authority in Kentucky and Tennessee.

The long and loud separatist discussion, which aimed at breaking the ties between East and West, is described in "The Winning of the West" clearly and honestly. The bottom difficulty was geographical. The drainage of the country would run down the Mississippi southward instead of crossing the mountains eastward; and the natural mart of the region was New Orleans. Hence wild schemes of setting up an independent government at various times from 1780 to 1796. Hence, still wilder schemes of coming under the yellow-and-red banner of Spain, which would have meant presumably a group of rival American States which would lap up the Spanish colonies of Louisiana and Texas. Nowhere in American literature is this movement so carefully and so justly studied. There is no sparing of the traitors and the spies, some of whom wore the uniform of the United States.

James Wilkinson in particular is forever pilloried in these pages, though Roosevelt did not then know the depths of slime into which that trusted officer plunged, by accepting Spanish citizenship and pocketing the money that bought his treason. On the other hand, there is no blinking the fact that the Eastern proposition to close the Mississippi would have been an unbearable blow to the new Southwest; and also that some men who were strongly inclined to separation lived to be pillars of their States and of the Union.

Roosevelt recognizes also the unintentional service of the Indian foes of the Kentuckians. "The obstinate and bloody warfare waged by the Indians against the frontiersmen was in one way of great service to the nation, for it kept back the frontier and forced the settle-

ments to remain more or less compact and in touch with the country behind them."

Because of these dangers Roosevelt rejoices in the slow but steady approach of the frontier communities to their full allegiance. First the Virginia and North Carolina settlements were made counties of the main States; then by the typical American process of conventions and elections and more conventions and drafts of constitutions, the point was reached where Kentucky became a member of the Union of States in 1792 and Tennessee in 1796.

Next in sequence and equal in import was the opening up of the Northwest. By the time the first great frontier march of discovery, exploration, settlements, aggregations of settlements, self-governing commonwealths and federal States had settled the future of the Southwest, another group of Western communities was going through the same stages. The South as well as the North early saw that the region beyond the Ohio could not have been conquered by the Virginians but for the Continental armies holding the British on the seaboard. Hence by general consent this area became a national domain under official colonization.

The movement much resembled the founding of the English colonies a century and a half earlier; and the system has since been followed all the way across the Continent. Thus were avoided those long disputes over the land rights of the settlers, and over haphazard or temporary frontier governments. Both the title to the land and the power to rule it were in the hands of Congress. The nation, however, was faced with just the same difficulty from the Indians as the settlements and later States in the Southwest.

It is a necessary part of Roosevelt's plan to describe the Indian wars of the Northwest, and also the manner in which the federal government dealt with the Indians of both sections. Here one comes upon a serious element in the problem. The British authorities held the Great Lakes and the Indian country immediately south of them. Detroit was a centre of their fur trade in American territory. From 1782 to 1796 the British military men and Indian agents backed up the northwestern Indians in a stubborn resistance to the United States, with which England was at nominal peace.

The high point in this ignoble aid to the Indian enemies of the Americans culminates in the speech of Lord Dorchester, Governor of Canada, in 1794: "Children, since my return I find no appearance of a line remains; and from the manner in which the people of the United States push on and act and talk . . . I shall not be surprised if we are at war with them in the course of the present year; and if so a line must be drawn by the warriors . . . we have acted in the most peaceable manner and borne the language and conduct of the people of the United States with patience; but I believe our patience is almost exhausted."

The same policy was followed by the British in the South during and after the Revolutionary War, to the wrath of the later historian. It meant aid and comfort to the savages who were doubtless fighting for the ultimate protection of their hunting-grounds, but who fought with scalping-knife and stake, and whose favorite enemy was the lone frontiersman and his wife and children. Nor is that all. Neither the Southern nor the Northern Indian could have resisted the oncoming of the white settlers for a single year, had they not been provided with guns, powder, and ball, coming from white

traders; deliberately sold by the English on the north and the Spaniards on the south. The process was prolonged. The deaths both of white men and Indians were many times multiplied because of this treachery of white men against white men.

Even without British incitement and aid the Northwest Indians were bound to resist the white settlers. They were on the land, entertained no thought of accepting civilization, and fought with all their skill to hold back the palefaces. The wars in the Northwest began in a small way about 1787 when the national troops first appeared. Then followed the unpardonable defeats of national troops under command of Crawford and St. Clair. The only solution was to make a thorough campaign under a real soldier; Mad Anthony Wayne broke up the Indian force at Fallen Timbers in 1794, and thus put an end to organized Indian hostilities in that part of the world for many years. These campaigns are graphically told by Roosevelt.

Even before the land was cleared of savage enemies, the systematic colonization of the Northwest began by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 which Roosevelt much admires. The incoming settlers had to face the wilderness but not the wild men, and by a succession of land ordinances and rectangular surveys the country was easily opened up to settlers, partly from New England and partly from the South. To Rufus Putnam and Manasseh Cutler and the other leaders the author pays due homage.

The conclusion of the work is a discussion which really comes outside its chronological scope. This brief sequel shows how the work of civilization in the Southwest spread beyond the bounds of 1789. A chapter deals with the relations with Spain, and particularly

with the Spanish authorities in New Orleans. Roosevelt's point of view is incontrovertible. He says that destiny intended the mouth of the Mississippi and the adjacent territory east and west to belong to the American frontiersman; and that no forces that could be brought to bear by Spain would long resist them.

To the Louisiana treaty of 1803 with Napoleon and to the subsequent wild expedition of Burr, brief attention is given. The year 1796 is, however, really the limit of the work, for it marks the end of the fateful history of the self-planted American colonies, thrust into the heart of the Indian country and there held against all odds, until the whole vast stretch north and south of the Ohio River was completely held by the United States, to be the home of American freemen. Among the national services of the great man and eminent historical author, not the least is this stirring account of the developing of the conquest of the wilderness, the doubling of American territory, the extension of democracy, the laying of sure foundations for the great Federal Republic.

THE WINNING OF THE WEST

AN ACCOUNT OF THE EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT OF OUR COUNTRY FROM THE ALLEGHANIES TO THE PACIFIC

I

THIS BOOK
IS DEDICATED, WITH HIS PERMISSION
TO

FRANCIS PARKMAN

TO WHOM AMERICANS WHO FEEL A PRIDE IN THE
PIONEER HISTORY OF THEIR COUNTRY
ARE SO GREATLY INDEBTED

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

THE WINNING OF THE WEST. By Theodore Roosevelt. Author of "The Naval War of 1812," "Thomas Hart Benton," "Gouverneur Morris," "Hunting Trips of a Ranchman," "Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail," "Essays on Practical Politics." . . . New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1889–1896. (Titles of the four volumes vary.)

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This work was published as follows: Volumes I and II, 1889; Volume III, 1894, and Volume IV, 1896. It was the author's intention to continue the work through the taking of Florida and Oregon, the history of the Republic of Texas, and the acquisition of New Mexico and California, but this project was never carried out. The greater part of the work appeared for the first time in book form, but the first two chapters of Volume IV were reprinted, with the addition of some fifteen pages, from *Harper's Magazine,* where they appeared as follows: ST. CLAIR'S DEFEAT, 1791, in February; and MAD ANTHONY WAYNE; AND THE FIGHT OF THE FALLEN TIMBERS, 1792–1795, in April, 1896. The work has been frequently reprinted. A page of the original manuscript was included in each set of the Daniel Boone edition.

PREFACE

Much of the material on which this work is based is to be found in the archives of the American Government, which date back to 1774, when the first Continental Congress assembled. The earliest sets have been published complete up to 1777, under the title of "American Archives," and will be hereafter designated by this name. These early volumes contain an immense amount of material, because in them are to be found memoranda of private individuals and many of the public papers of the various colonial and State governments, as well as those of the Confederation. The documents from 1789 on—no longer containing any papers of the separate States—have also been gathered and printed under the heading of "American State Papers," by which term they will be hereafter referred to.

The mass of public papers coming in between these two series, and covering the period extending from 1776 to 1789, have never been published, and in great part have either never been examined, or else have been examined in the most cursory manner. The original documents are all in the Department of State at Washington, and for convenience will be referred to as "State Department MSS." They are bound in two or three hundred large volumes; exactly how many I cannot say, because, though they are numbered, yet several of the numbers themselves contain from two or three to ten or fifteen volumes apiece. The volumes to which reference will most often be made are the following:

No. 15. Letters of Huntington.
No. 16. Letters of the Presidents of Congress.
No. 18. Letter-Book B.
No. 20. Vol. 1. Reports of Committees on State Papers.
No. 27. Reports of Committees on the War Office. 1776–1778.
No. 30. Reports of Committees.
No. 32. Reports of Committees of the States and of the Week.
No. 41. Vol. 3. Memorials E. F. G. 1776–1788.
No. 41. Vol. 5. Memorials K. L. 1777–1789.
No. 50. Letters and papers of Oliver Pollock. 1777–1792.
No. 51. Vol. 2. Intercepted Letters. 1779–1782.
No. 56. Indian Affairs.
No. 71. Vol. 1. Virginia State Papers.
No. 73. Georgia State Papers.
No. 81. Vol. 2. Reports of Secretary John Jay.
No. 120. Vol. 2. American Letters.
No. 124. Vol. 3. Reports of Jay.
No. 125. Negotiation Book.
No. 136. Vol. 1. Reports of Board of Treasury.
No. 136. Vol. 2. Reports of Board of Treasury.
No. 147. Vol. 2. Reports of Board of War.
No. 147. Vol. 5. Reports of Board of War.
No. 147. Vol. 6. Reports of Board of War.
No. 148. Vol. 1. Letters from Board of War.
No. 149. Vol. 1. Letters and Reports from B. Lincoln, Secretary at War.
No. 149. Vol. 2. Letters and Reports from B. Lincoln, Secretary at War.
No. 149. Vol. 3. Letters and Reports from B. Lincoln, Secretary at War.
No. 150. Vol. 1. Letters of H. Knox, Secretary at War.
No. 150. Vol. 2. Letters of H. Knox, Secretary at War.
No. 150. Vol. 3. Letters of H. Knox, Secretary at War.
No. 152. Vol. 11. Letters of General Washington.

No. 163. Letters of General Clinton, Nixon, Nicola, Morgan, Harmar, Muhlenburg.

No. 169. Vol. 9. Washington's Letters.

No. 180. Reports of Secretary of Congress.

Besides these numbered volumes, the State Department contains others, such as Washington's letter-book, marked War Department 1792, '3, '4, '5. There are also a series of numbered volumes of Letters to Washington, Nos. 33 and 49, containing reports from George Rogers Clark. The Jefferson papers, which are likewise preserved here, are bound in several series, each containing a number of volumes. The Madison and Monroe papers, also kept here, are not yet bound; I quote them as the Madison MSS. and the Monroe MSS.

My thanks are due to Mr. W. C. Hamilton, Assistant Librarian, for giving me every facility to examine the material.

At Nashville, Tenn., I had access to a mass of original matter in the shape of files of old newspapers, of unpublished letters, diaries, reports, and other manuscripts. I was given every opportunity to examine these at my leisure, and, indeed, to take such as were most valuable to my own home. For this my thanks are especially due to Judge John M. Lea, to whom, as well as to my many other friends in Nashville, I shall always feel under a debt on account of the unfailing courtesy with which I was treated. I must express my particular acknowledgments to Mr. Lemuel R. Campbell. The Nashville manuscripts, etc., of which I have made most use are the following:

The Robertson MSS., comprising two large volumes, entitled the "Correspondence, etc., of Gen'l James Robertson," from 1784 to 1814. They belong to the

library of Nashville University; I had some difficulty in finding the second volume, but finally succeeded.

The Campbell MSS., consisting of letters and memoranda to and from different members of the Campbell family, who were prominent in the Revolution; dealing for the most part with Lord Dunmore's war, the Cherokee wars, the battle of Kings Mountain, land speculations, etc. They are in the possession of Mr. Lemuel R. Campbell, who most kindly had copies of all the important ones sent me, at great personal trouble.

Some of the Sevier and Jackson papers, the original MS. diaries of Donelson on the famous voyage down the Tennessee and up the Cumberland, and of Benj. Hawkins while surveying the Tennessee boundary, memoranda of Thos. Washington, Overton, and Dunham, the earliest files of the Knoxville *Gazette* from 1791 to 1795, etc. These are all in the library of the Tennessee Historical Society.

For original matter connected with Kentucky, I am greatly indebted to Colonel Reuben T. Durrett, of Louisville, the founder of the "Filson Club," which has done such admirable historical work of late years. He allowed me to work at my leisure in his library, the most complete in the world on all subjects connected with Kentucky history. Among other matter, he possesses the Shelby MSS., containing a number of letters to and from, and a dictated autobiography of, Isaac Shelby; MSS. journals of Reverend James Smith, during two tours in the Western country in 1785 and '95; early files of the "Kentucke" *Gazette;* books owned by the early settlers; papers of Boone and George Rogers Clark; MS. notes on Kentucky by George Bradford, who settled there in 1779; MS. copy of the record book of Colonel John Todd, the first governor of the Illinois

country after Clark's conquest; the McAfee MSS., consisting of an Account of the First Settlement of Salt River, the Autobiography of Robert McAfee, and a Brief Memorandum of the Civil and Natural History of Kentucky; MS. autobiography of Reverend William Hickman, who visited Kentucky in 1776, etc.

I am also under great obligations to Colonel John Mason Brown of Louisville, another member of the Filson Club, for assistance rendered me; particularly for having sent me six bound volumes of MSS., containing the correspondence of the Spanish Minister Gardoqui, copied from the Spanish archives.

At Lexington I had access to the Breckenridge MSS., through the kindness of Mr. Ethelbert D. Warfield; and to the Clay MSS. through the kindness of Miss Lucretia Hart Clay. I am particularly indebted to Miss Clay for her courtesy in sending me many of the most valuable old Hart and Benton letters, depositions, accounts, and the like.

The Blount MSS. were sent to me from California by the Honorable W. D. Stephens of Los Angeles, although I was not personally known to him—an instance of courtesy and generosity in return for which I could do nothing save express my sincere appreciation and gratitude, which I take this opportunity of publicly repeating.

The Gates MSS., from which I drew some important facts not hitherto known concerning the Kings Mountain campaign, are in the library of the New York Historical Society.

The "Virginia State Papers" have recently been published, and are now accessible to all.

Among the most valuable of the hitherto untouched manuscripts which I have obtained, are the Haldimand

papers, preserved in the Canadian archives at Ottawa. They give, for the first time, the British and Indian side of all the northwestern fighting; including Clark's campaigns, the siege of Boonesborough, the battle of the Blue Licks, Crawford's defeat, etc. The Canadian archivist, Mr. Douglass Brymner, furnished me copies of all I needed with a prompt courtesy for which I am more indebted than I can well express.

I have been obliged to rely mainly on these collections of early documents as my authorities, especially for that portion of Western history prior to 1783. Excluding the valuable, but very brief, and often very inaccurate, sketch which Filson wrote down as coming from Boone, there are no printed histories of Kentucky earlier than Marshall's, in 1812; while the first Tennessee history was Haywood's, in 1822. Both Marshall and Haywood did excellent work; the former was an able writer, the latter was a student, and (like the Kentucky historian Mann Butler) a sound political thinker, devoted to the Union, and prompt to stand up for the right. But both of them, in dealing with the early history of the country beyond the Alleghanies, wrote about matters that had happened from thirty to fifty years before, and were obliged to base most of their statements on tradition or on what the pioneers remembered in their old age. The later historians, for the most part, merely follow these two. In consequence, the mass of original material, in the shape of official reports and contemporary letters, contained in the Haldimand MSS., the Campbell MSS., the McAfee MSS., the Gardoqui MSS., the State Department MSS., the "Virginia State Papers," etc., not only cast a flood of new light upon this early history, but necessitate its being entirely rewritten. For instance, they give an absolutely new

aspect to, and in many cases completely reverse, the current accounts of all the Indian fighting, both against the Cherokees and the northwestern tribes; they give for the first time a clear view of frontier diplomacy, of the intrigues with the Spaniards, and even of the mode of life in the backwoods, and of the workings of the civil government. It may be mentioned that the various proper names are spelt in so many different ways, that it is difficult to know which to choose. Even Clark is sometimes spelt Clarke, while Boone was apparently indifferent as to whether his name should or should not contain the final silent *e*. As for the original Indian titles, it is often quite impossible to give them even approximately; the early writers often wrote the same Indian words in such different ways that they bear no resemblance whatever to one another.

In conclusion, I would say that it has been to me emphatically a labor of love to write of the great deeds of the border people. I am not blind to their manifold shortcomings, nor yet am I ignorant of their many strong and good qualities. For a number of years I spent most of my time on the frontier, and lived and worked like any other frontiersman. The wild country in which we dwelt and across which we wandered was in the far West; and there were, of course, many features in which the life of a cattleman on the great plains and among the Rockies differed from that led by a backwoodsman in the Alleghany forests a century before. Yet the points of resemblance were far more numerous and striking. We guarded our herds of branded cattle and shaggy horses, hunted bear, bison, elk, and deer, established civil government, and put down evil-doers, white and red, on the banks of the Little Missouri, and among the wooded, precipitous

foot-hills of the Bighorn, exactly as did the pioneers who a hundred years previously built their log cabins beside the Kentucky or in the valleys of the Great Smokies. The men who have shared in the fast-vanishing frontier life of the present feel a peculiar sympathy with the already long-vanished frontier life of the past.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Sagamore Hill,
May, 1889.

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THE WINNING OF THE WEST

"O strange New World that yit wast never young,
Whose youth from thee by gripin' need was wrung,
Brown foundlin' o' the woods, whose baby-bed
Was prowled roun' by the Injun's cracklin' tread,
And who grew'st strong thru shifts an' wants an' pains,
Nursed by stern men with empires in their brains,
Who saw in vision their young Ishmel strain
With each hard hand a vassal ocean's mane;
Thou skilled by Freedom and by gret events
To pitch new states ez Old World men pitch tents,
Thou taught by fate to know Jehovah's plan,
Thet man's devices can't unmake a man.

. . . . . .

"Oh, my friends, thank your God, if you have one, that he
'Twixt the Old World and you set the gulf of a sea;
Be strong-backed, brown-handed, upright as your pines,
By the scale of a hemisphere shape your designs."

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

CHAPTER I

THE SPREAD OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLES

DURING the past three centuries the spread of the English-speaking peoples over the world's waste spaces has been not only the most striking feature in the world's history, but also the event of all others most far-reaching in its effects and its importance.

The tongue which Bacon feared to use in his writings, lest they should remain forever unknown to all but the inhabitants of a relatively unimportant insular kingdom, is now the speech of two continents. The Common Law which Coke jealously upheld in the southern half of a single European island, is now the law of the land throughout the vast regions of Australasia, and of America north of the Rio Grande. The names of the plays that Shakespeare wrote are household words in the mouths of mighty nations whose wide domains were to him more unreal than the realm of Prester John. Over half the descendants of their fellow countrymen of that day now dwell in lands which, when these three Englishmen were born, held not a single white inhabitant; the race which, when they were in their prime, was hemmed in between the North and the Irish seas, to-day holds sway over worlds whose endless coasts are washed by the waves of the three great oceans.

There have been many other races that at one time or another had their great periods of race expansion—

as distinguished from mere conquest—but there has never been another whose expansion has been either so broad or so rapid.

At one time, many centuries ago, it seemed as if the Germanic peoples, like their Celtic foes and neighbors, would be absorbed into the all-conquering Roman power, and, merging their identity in that of the victors, would accept their law, their speech, and their habits of thought. But this danger vanished forever on the day of the slaughter by the Teutoburger Wald, when the legions of Varus were broken by the rush of Hermann's wild warriors.

Two or three hundred years later the Germans, no longer on the defensive, themselves went forth from their marshy forests, conquering and to conquer. For century after century they swarmed out of the dark woodland east of the Rhine and north of the Danube; and as their force spent itself, the movement was taken up by their brethren who dwelt along the coasts of the Baltic and the North Atlantic. From the Volga to the Pillars of Hercules, from Sicily to Britain, every land in turn bowed to the warlike prowess of the stalwart sons of Odin. Rome and Novgorod, the imperial city of Italy as well as the squalid capital of Muscovy, acknowledged the sway of kings of Teutonic or Scandinavian blood.

In most cases, however, the victorious invaders merely intruded themselves among the original and far more numerous owners of the land, ruled over them, and were absorbed by them. This happened to both Teuton and Scandinavian—to the descendants of Alaric as well as to the children of Rurik. The Dane in Ireland became a Celt; the Goth of the Iberian peninsula became a Spaniard; Frank and Norwegian alike were

merged into the mass of Romance-speaking Gauls, who themselves finally grew to be called by the names of their masters. Thus it came about that though the German tribes conquered Europe they did not extend the limits of Germany nor the sway of the German race. On the contrary, they strengthened the hands of the rivals of the people from whom they sprang. They gave rulers—kaisers, kings, barons, and knights—to all the lands they overran; here and there they imposed their own names on kingdoms and principalities—as in France, Normandy, Burgundy, and Lombardy; they grafted the feudal system on the Roman jurisprudence, and interpolated a few Teutonic words in the Latin dialects of the peoples they had conquered; but, hopelessly outnumbered, they were soon lost in the mass of their subjects, and adopted from them their laws, their culture, and their language. As a result, the mixed races of the south—the Latin nations as they are sometimes called—strengthened by the infusion of northern blood, sprang anew into vigorous life, and became for the time being the leaders of the European world.

There was but one land whereof the winning made a lasting addition to Germanic soil; but this land was destined to be of more importance in the future of the Germanic peoples than all their continental possessions, original and acquired, put together. The day when the keels of the Low Dutch sea-thieves first grated on the British coast was big with the doom of many nations. There sprang up in conquered southern Britain, when its name had been significantly changed to England, that branch of the Germanic stock which was in the end to grasp almost literally world-wide power, and by its overshadowing growth to dwarf into comparative insignificance all its kindred folk. At the time, in the

general wreck of the civilized world, the making of England attracted but little attention. Men's eyes were riveted on the empires conquered by the hosts of Alaric, Theodoric, and Clovis, not on the swarm of little kingdoms and earldoms founded by the nameless chiefs who led each his band of hard-rowing, hard-fighting henchmen across the stormy waters of the German Ocean. Yet the rule and the race of Goth, Frank, and Burgund have vanished from off the earth, while the sons of the unknown Saxon, Anglian, and Friesic warriors now hold in their hands the fate of the coming years.

After the great Teutonic wanderings were over, there came a long lull, until, with the discovery of America, a new period of even vaster race expansion began. During this lull the nations of Europe took on their present shapes. Indeed, the so-called Latin nations—the French and Spaniards, for instance—may be said to have been born after the first set of migrations ceased. Their national history, as such, does not really begin until about that time, whereas that of the Germanic peoples stretches back unbroken to the days when we first hear of their existence. It would be hard to say which one of half a dozen races that existed in Europe during the early centuries of the present era should be considered as especially the ancestor of the modern Frenchman or Spaniard. When the Romans conquered Gaul and Iberia they did not in any place drive out the ancient owners of the soil; they simply Romanized them, and left them as the base of the population. By the Frankish and Visigothic invasions another strain of blood was added, to be speedily absorbed, while the invaders took the language of the conquered people, and established themselves as the ruling class. Thus the modern nations who sprang from this mixture derive

portions of their governmental system and general policy from one race, most of their blood from another, and their language, law, and culture from a third.

The English race, on the contrary, has a perfectly continuous history. When Alfred reigned, the English already had a distinct national being; when Charlemagne reigned, the French, as we use the term to-day, had no national being whatever. The Germans of the mainland merely overran the countries that lay in their path; but the sea-rovers who won England to a great extent actually displaced the native Britons. The former were absorbed by the subject-races; the latter, on the contrary, slew or drove off or assimilated the original inhabitants. Unlike all the other Germanic swarms, the English took neither creed nor custom, neither law nor speech, from their beaten foes. At the time when the dynasty of the Capets had become firmly established at Paris, France was merely part of a country where Latinized Gauls and Basques were ruled by Latinized Franks, Goths, Burgunds, and Normans; but the people across the Channel then showed little trace of Celtic or Romance influence. It would be hard to say whether Vercingetorix or Cæsar, Clovis or Syagrius, has the better right to stand as the prototype of a modern French general. There is no such doubt in the other case. The average Englishman, American, or Australian of to-day who wishes to recall the feats of power with which his race should be credited in the shadowy dawn of its history, may go back to the half-mythical glories of Hengist and Horsa, perhaps to the deeds of Civilis the Batavian, or to those of the hero of the Teutoburger fight, but certainly to the wars neither of the Silurian chief Caractacus nor of his conqueror, the after-time Emperor Vespasian.

Nevertheless, when, in the sixteenth century, the European peoples began to extend their dominions beyond Europe, England had grown to differ profoundly from the Germanic countries of the mainland. A very large Celtic element had been introduced into the English blood, and, in addition, there had been a considerable Scandinavian admixture. More important still were the radical changes brought by the Norman conquest; chief among them the transformation of the old English tongue into the magnificent language which is now the common inheritance of so many wide-spread peoples. England's insular position, moreover, permitted it to work out its own fate comparatively unhampered by the presence of outside powers; so that it developed a type of nationality totally distinct from the types of the European mainland.

All this is not foreign to American history. The vast movement by which this continent was conquered and peopled cannot be rightly understood if considered solely by itself. It was the crowning and greatest achievement of a series of mighty movements, and it must be taken in connection with them. Its true significance will be lost unless we grasp, however roughly, the past race-history of the nations who took part therein.

When, with the voyages of Columbus and his successors, the great period of extra-European colonization began, various nations strove to share in the work. Most of them had to plant their colonies in lands across the sea; Russia, alone, was by her geographical position enabled to extend her frontiers by land, and, in consequence, her comparatively recent colonization of Siberia bears some resemblance to our own work in the Western United States. The other countries of Europe were

forced to find their outlets for conquest and emigration beyond the ocean, and, until the colonists had taken firm root in their new homes, the mastery of the seas thus became a matter of vital consequence.

Among the lands beyond the ocean America was the first reached and the most important. It was conquered by different European races, and shoals of European settlers were thrust forth upon its shores. These sometimes displaced and sometimes merely overcame and lived among the natives. They also, to their own lasting harm, committed a crime whose short-sighted folly was worse than its guilt, for they brought hordes of African slaves, whose descendants now form immense populations in certain portions of the land. Throughout the continent we therefore find the white, red, and black races in every stage of purity and intermixture. One result of this great turmoil of conquest and immigration has been that, in certain parts of America, the lines of cleavage of race are so far from coinciding with the lines of cleavage of speech that they run at right angles to them—as in the four communities of Ontario, Quebec, Hayti, and Jamaica.

Each intruding European power, in winning for itself new realms beyond the seas, had to wage a twofold war, overcoming the original inhabitants with one hand, and with the other warding off the assaults of the kindred nations that were bent on the same schemes. Generally, the contests of the latter kind were much the most important. The victories by which the struggles between the European conquerors themselves were ended deserve lasting commemoration. Yet, sometimes, even the most important of them, sweeping though they were, were in parts less sweeping than they seemed. It would be impossible to overestimate the

far-reaching effects of the overthrow of the French power in America; but Lower Canada, where the fatal blow was given, itself suffered nothing but a political conquest, which did not interfere in the least with the growth of a French state along both sides of the lower St. Lawrence. In a somewhat similar way Dutch communities have held their own, and indeed have sprung up, in South Africa.

All the European nations touching on the Atlantic seaboard took part in the new work, with very varying success—Germany alone, then rent by many feuds, having no share therein. Portugal founded a single state, Brazil. The Scandinavian nations did little; their chief colony fell under the control of the Dutch. The English and the Spaniards were the two nations to whom the bulk of the new lands fell, the former getting much the greater portion. The conquests of the Spaniards took place in the sixteenth century. The West Indies and Mexico, Peru and the limitless grass plains of what is now the Argentine Confederation—all these and the lands lying between them had been conquered and colonized by the Spaniards before there was a single English settlement in the New World, and while the fleets of the Catholic king still held for him the lordship of the ocean. Then the cumbrous Spanish vessels succumbed to the attacks of the swift war-ships of Holland and England, and the sun of the Spanish world-dominion set as quickly as it had risen. Spain at once came to a standstill; it was only here and there that she even extended her rule over a few neighboring Indian tribes, while she was utterly unable to take the offensive against the French, Dutch, and English. But it is a singular thing that these vigorous and powerful newcomers, who had so quickly put a stop to her further

growth, yet wrested from her very little of what was already hers. They plundered a great many Spanish cities and captured a great many Spanish galleons, but they made no great or lasting conquest of Spanish territory. Their mutual jealousies, and the fear each felt of the others, were among the main causes of this state of things; and hence it came about that after the opening of the seventeenth century the wars they waged against one another were of far more ultimate consequence than the wars they waged against the former mistress of the western world. England in the end drove both France and Holland from the field; but it was under the banner of the American Republic, not under that of the British monarchy, that the English-speaking peoples first won vast stretches of land from the descendants of the Spanish conquerors.

The three most powerful of Spain's rivals waged many a long war with one another to decide which should grasp the sceptre that had slipped from Spanish hands. The fleets of Holland fought with stubborn obstinacy to wrest from England her naval supremacy; but they failed, and in the end the greater portion of the Dutch domains fell to their foes. The French likewise began a course of conquest and colonization at the same time the English did, and after a couple of centuries of rivalry, ending in prolonged warfare, they also succumbed. The close of the most important colonial contest ever waged left the French without a foot of soil on the North American mainland; while their victorious foes had not only obtained the lead in the race for supremacy on that continent, but had also won the command of the ocean. They thenceforth found themselves free to work their will in all sea-girt lands, unchecked by hostile European influence.

Most fortunately, when England began her career as a colonizing power in America, Spain had already taken possession of the populous tropical and subtropical regions, and the northern power was thus forced to form her settlements in the sparsely peopled temperate zone.

It is of vital importance to remember that the English and Spanish conquests in America differed from each other very much as did the original conquests which gave rise to the English and the Spanish nations. The English had exterminated or assimilated the Celts of Britain, and they substantially repeated the process with the Indians of America; although of course in America there was very little, instead of very much, assimilation. The Germanic strain is dominant in the blood of the average Englishman, exactly as the English strain is dominant in the blood of the average American. Twice a portion of the race has shifted its home, in each case undergoing a marked change, due both to outside influence and to internal development; but in the main retaining, especially in the last instance, the general race characteristics.

It was quite otherwise in the countries conquered by Cortes, Pizarro, and their successors. Instead of killing or driving off the natives as the English did, the Spaniards simply sat down in the midst of a much more numerous aboriginal population. The process by which Central and South America became Spanish bore very close resemblance to the process by which the lands of southeastern Europe were turned into Romance-speaking countries. The bulk of the original inhabitants remained unchanged in each case. There was little displacement of population. Roman soldiers and magistrates, Roman merchants and handicraftsmen were

thrust in among the Celtic and Iberian peoples, exactly as the Spanish military and civil rulers, priests, traders, land-owners, and mine-owners settled down among the Indians of Peru and Mexico. By degrees, in each case, the many learnt the language and adopted the laws, religion, and governmental system of the few, although keeping certain of their own customs and habits of thought. Though the ordinary Spaniard of to-day speaks a Romance dialect, he is mainly of Celto-Iberian blood; and though most Mexicans and Peruvians speak Spanish, yet the great majority of them trace their descent back to the subjects of Montezuma and the Incas. Moreover, exactly as in Europe little ethnic islands of Breton and Basque stock have remained unaffected by the Romance flood, so in America there are large communities where the inhabitants keep unchanged the speech and the customs of their Indian forefathers.

The English-speaking peoples now hold more and better land than any other American nationality or set of nationalities. They have in their veins less aboriginal American blood than any of their neighbors. Yet it is noteworthy that the latter have tacitly allowed them to arrogate to themselves the title of "Americans," whereby to designate their distinctive and individual nationality.

So much for the difference between the way in which the English and the way in which other European nations have conquered and colonized. But there have been likewise very great differences in the methods and courses of the English-speaking peoples themselves, at different times and in different places.

The settlement of the United States and Canada, throughout most of their extent, bears much resem-

blance to the later settlement of Australia and New Zealand. The English conquest of India and even the English conquest of South Africa come in an entirely different category. The first was a mere political conquest, like the Dutch conquest of Java or the extension of the Roman Empire over parts of Asia. South Africa in some respects stands by itself, because there the English are confronted by another white race which it is as yet uncertain whether they can assimilate, and, what is infinitely more important, because they are there confronted by a very large native population with which they cannot mingle, and which neither dies out nor recedes before their advance. It is not likely, but it is at least within the bounds of possibility, that in the course of centuries the whites of South Africa will suffer a fate akin to that which befell the Greek colonists in the Tauric Chersonese, and be swallowed up in the overwhelming mass of black barbarism.

On the other hand, it may fairly be said that in America and Australia the English race has already entered into and begun the enjoyment of its great inheritance. When these continents were settled they contained the largest tracts of fertile, temperate, thinly peopled country on the face of the globe. We cannot rate too highly the importance of their acquisition. Their successful settlement was a feat which by comparison utterly dwarfs all the European wars of the last two centuries; just as the importance of the issues at stake in the wars of Rome and Carthage completely overshadowed the interests for which the various contemporary Greek kingdoms were at the same time striving.

Australia, which was much less important than America, was also won and settled with far less difficulty. The natives were so few in number and of such

a low type, that they practically offered no resistance at all, being but little more hindrance than an equal number of ferocious beasts. There was no rivalry whatever by any European power, because the actual settlement—not the mere expatriation of convicts—only began when England, as a result of her struggle with Republican and Imperial France, had won the absolute control of the seas. Unknown to themselves, Nelson and his fellow admirals settled the fate of Australia, upon which they probably never wasted a thought. Trafalgar decided much more than the mere question whether Great Britain should temporarily share the fate that so soon befell Prussia; for in all probability it decided the destiny of the island-continent that lay in the South Seas.

The history of the English-speaking race in America has been widely different. In Australia there was no fighting whatever, whether with natives or with other foreigners. In America for the past two centuries and a half there has been a constant succession of contests with powerful and warlike native tribes, with rival European nations, and with American nations of European origin. But even in America there have been wide differences in the way the work has had to be done in different parts of the country, since the close of the great colonial contests between England, France, and Spain.

The extension of the English, westward through Canada, since the War of the Revolution has been in its essential features merely a less important repetition of what has gone on in the northern United States. The gold-miner, the transcontinental railway, and the soldier have been the pioneers of civilization. The chief point of difference, which was but small, arose from the fact that the whole of western Canada was for a long

time under the control of the most powerful of all the fur companies, in whose employ were very many French *voyageurs* and *coureurs de bois*. From these there sprang up in the valleys of the Red River and the Saskatchewan a singular race of half-breeds, with a unique semicivilization of their own. It was with these half-breeds, and not, as in the United States, with the Indians, that the settlers of northwestern Canada had their main difficulties.

In what now forms the United States, taking the country as a whole, the foes who had to be met and overcome were very much more formidable. The ground had to be not only settled but conquered, sometimes at the expense of the natives, often at the expense of rival European races. As already pointed out, the Indians themselves formed one of the main factors in deciding the fate of the continent. They were never able in the end to avert the white conquest, but they could often delay its advance for a long spell of years. The Iroquois, for instance, held their own against all comers for two centuries. Many other tribes stayed for a time the oncoming white flood, or even drove it back; in Maine, the settlers were for a hundred years confined to a narrow strip of seacoast. Against the Spaniards, there were even here and there Indian nations who definitely recovered the ground they had lost.

When the whites first landed, the superiority and, above all, the novelty of their arms gave them a very great advantage. But the Indians soon became accustomed to the newcomers' weapons and style of warfare. By the time the English had consolidated the Atlantic colonies under their rule, the Indians had become what they have remained ever since, the most formidable savage foes ever encountered by colonists of European

stock. Relatively to their numbers, they have shown themselves far more to be dreaded than the Zulus or even the Maoris.

Their presence has caused the process of settlement to go on at unequal rates of speed in different places; the flood has been hemmed in at one point, or has been forced to flow round an island of native population at another. Had the Indians been as helpless as the native Australians were, the continent of North America would have had an altogether different history. It would not only have been settled far more rapidly, but also on very different lines. Not only have the red men themselves kept back the settlements, but they have also had a very great effect upon the outcome of the struggles between the different intrusive European peoples. Had the original inhabitants of the Mississippi valley been as numerous and unwarlike as the Aztecs, De Soto would have repeated the work of Cortes, and we would very possibly have been barred out of the greater portion of our present domain. Had it not been for their Indian allies, it would have been impossible for the French to prolong, as they did, their struggle with their much more numerous English neighbors.

The Indians have shrunk back before our advance only after fierce and dogged resistance. They were never numerous in the land, but exactly what their numbers were when the whites first appeared is impossible to tell. Probably an estimate of half a million for those within the limits of the present United States is not far wrong; but in any such calculation there is of necessity a large element of mere rough guesswork. Formerly writers greatly overestimated their original numbers, counting them by millions. Now it is the fashion to go to the other extreme, and even to main-

tain they have not decreased at all. This last is a theory that can only be upheld on the supposition that the whole does not consist of the sum of the parts; for whereas we can check off on our fingers the tribes that have slightly increased, we can enumerate scores that have died out almost before our eyes. Speaking broadly, they have mixed but little with the English (as distinguished from the French and Spanish) invaders. They are driven back, or die out, or retire to their own reservations; but they are not often assimilated. Still, on every frontier, there is always a certain amount of assimilation going on, much more than is commonly admitted;[1] and whenever a French or Spanish community has been absorbed by the energetic Americans, a certain amount of Indian blood has been absorbed also. There seems to be a chance that in one part of our country, the Indian Territory, the Indians, who are continually advancing in civilization, will remain as the ground element of the population, like the Creoles in Louisiana, or the Mexicans in New Mexico.

The Americans, when they became a nation, continued even more successfully the work which they had begun as citizens of the several English colonies. At the outbreak of the Revolution they still all dwelt on the seaboard, either on the coast itself or along the banks of the streams flowing into the Atlantic. When the fight at Lexington took place they had no settlements beyond the mountain chain on our western border. It

[1] To this I can testify of my own knowledge as regards Montana, Dakota, and Minnesota. The mixture usually takes place in the ranks of the population where individuals lose all trace of their ancestry after two or three generations; so it is often honestly ignored, and sometimes mention of it is suppressed, the man regarding it as a taint. But I also know many very wealthy old frontiersmen whose half-breed children are now being educated, generally at convent schools, while in the northwestern cities I could point out some very charming men and women, in the best society, with a strain of Indian blood in their veins.

had taken them over a century and a half to spread from the Atlantic to the Alleghanies. In the next three-quarters of a century they spread from the Alleghanies to the Pacific. In doing this they not only dispossessed the Indian tribes, but they also won the land from its European owners. Britain had to yield the territory between the Ohio and the Great Lakes. By a purchase, of which we frankly announced that the alternative would be war, we acquired from France the vast, ill-defined region known as Louisiana. From the Spaniards, or from their descendants, we won the lands of Florida, Texas, New Mexico, and California.

All these lands were conquered after we had become a power, independent of every other, and one within our own borders—when we were no longer a loose assemblage of petty seaboard communities, each with only such relationship to its neighbor as was implied in their common subjection to a foreign king and a foreign people. Moreover, it is well always to remember that at the day when we began our career as a nation we already differed from our kinsmen of Britain in blood as well as in name; the word American already had more than a merely geographical signification. Americans belong to the English race only in the sense in which Englishmen belong to the German. The fact that no change of language has accompanied the second wandering of our people, from Britain to America, as it accompanied their first, from Germany to Britain, is due to the further fact that when the second wandering took place the race possessed a fixed literary language, and, thanks to the ease of communication, was kept in touch with the parent stock. The change of blood was probably as great in one case as in the other. The modern Englishman is descended from a Low-Dutch stock,

which, when it went to Britain, received into itself an enormous infusion of Celtic, a much smaller infusion of Norse and Danish, and also a certain infusion of Norman-French blood. When this new English stock came to America it mingled with and absorbed into itself immigrants from many European lands, and the process has gone on ever since. It is to be noted that, of the new blood thus acquired, the greatest proportion has come from the Dutch and German sources, and the next greatest from Irish, while the Scandinavian element comes third, and the only other of much consequence is French Huguenot. Thus it appears that no new element of importance has been added to the blood. Additions have been made to the elemental race-strains in much the same proportion as these were originally combined.

Some latter-day writers deplore the enormous immigration to our shores as making us a heterogeneous instead of a homogeneous people; but as a matter of fact we are less heterogeneous at the present day than we were at the outbreak of the Revolution. Our blood was as much mixed a century ago as it is now. No State now has a smaller proportion of English blood than New York or Pennsylvania had in 1775. Even in New England, where the English stock is the purest, there was a certain French and Irish mixture; in Virginia there were Germans in addition. In the other colonies, taken as a whole, it is not probable that much over half of the blood was English; Dutch, French, German, and Gaelic communities abounded.

But all were being rapidly fused into one people. As the Celt of Cornwall and the Saxon of Wessex are now alike Englishmen, so in 1775 Hollander and Huguenot, whether in New York or South Carolina, had become

Americans, undistinguishable from the New Englanders and Virginians, the descendants of the men who followed Cromwell or charged behind Rupert. When the great Western movement began we were already a people by ourselves. Moreover, the immense immigration from Europe that has taken place since had little or no effect on the way in which we extended our boundaries; it only began to be important about the time when we acquired our present limits. These limits would in all probability be what they are now even if we had not received a single European colonist since the Revolution.

Thus the Americans began their work of Western conquest as a separate and individual people, at the moment when they sprang into national life. It has been their great work ever since. All other questions, save those of the preservation of the Union itself and of the emancipation of the blacks, have been of subordinate importance when compared with the great question of how rapidly and how completely they were to subjugate that part of their continent lying between the eastern mountains and the Pacific. Yet the statesmen of the Atlantic seaboard were often unable to perceive this, and indeed frequently showed the same narrow jealousy of the communities beyond the Alleghanies that England felt for all America. Even if they were too broad-minded and far-seeing to feel thus, they yet were unable to fully appreciate the magnitude of the interests at stake in the West. They thought more of our right to the North Atlantic fisheries than of our ownership of the Mississippi valley; they were more interested in the fate of a bank or a tariff than in the settlement of the Oregon boundary. Most contemporary writers showed similar shortcomings in their

sense of historic perspective. The names of Ethan Allen and Marion are probably better known than is that of George Rogers Clark; yet their deeds, as regards their effects, could no more be compared to his, than his could be compared to Washington's. So it was with Houston. During his lifetime there were probably fifty men who, east of the Mississippi, were deemed far greater than he was. Yet in most cases their names have already almost faded from remembrance, while his fame will grow steadily brighter as the importance of his deeds is more thoroughly realized. Fortunately, in the long run, the mass of Easterners always backed up their Western brethren.

The kind of colonizing conquest, whereby the people of the United States have extended their borders, has much in common with the similar movements in Canada and Australia, all of them standing in sharp contrast to what has gone on in Spanish-American lands. But, of course, each is marked out in addition by certain peculiarities of its own. Moreover, even in the United States, the movement falls naturally into two divisions, which on several points differ widely from each other.

The way in which the southern part of our Western country—that is, all the land south of the Ohio, and from thence on to the Rio Grande and the Pacific—was won and settled, stands quite alone. The region north of it was filled up in a very different manner. The Southwest, including therein what was once called simply the West, and afterward the Middle West, was won by the people themselves, acting as individuals, or as groups of individuals, who hewed out their own fortunes in advance of any governmental action. On the other hand, the Northwest, speaking broadly, was ac-

quired by the government, the settlers merely taking possession of what the whole country guaranteed them. The Northwest is essentially a national domain; it is fitting that it should be, as it is, not only by position but also by feeling, the heart of the nation.

North of the Ohio the regular army went first. The settlements grew up behind the shelter of the federal troops of Harmar, St. Claire, and Wayne, and of their successors even to our own day. The wars in which the borderers themselves bore any part were few and trifling compared to the contests waged by the adventurers who won Kentucky, Tennessee, and Texas.

In the Southwest the early settlers acted as their own army, and supplied both leaders and men. Sevier, Robertson, Clark, and Boone led their fellow pioneers to battle, as Jackson did afterward, and as Houston did later still. Indeed the southwesterners not only won their own soil for themselves, but they were the chief instruments in the original acquisition of the Northwest also. Had it not been for the conquest of the Illinois towns in 1779 we would probably never have had any Northwest to settle; and the huge tract between the upper Mississippi and the Columbia, then called Upper Louisiana, fell into our hands only because the Kentuckians and Tennesseeans were resolutely bent on taking possession of New Orleans, either by bargain or battle. All of our territory lying beyond the Alleghanies, north and south, was first won for us by the southwesterners, fighting for their own hand. The northern part was afterward filled up by the thrifty, vigorous men of the Northeast, whose sons became the real rulers as well as the preservers of the Union; but these settlements of Northerners were rendered possible only by the deeds of the nation as a whole. They en-

tered on land that the Southerners had won, and they were kept there by the strong arm of the federal government; whereas the Southerners owed most of their victories only to themselves.

The first comers around Marietta did, it is true, share to a certain extent in the dangers of the existing Indian wars; but their trials are not to be mentioned beside those endured by the early settlers of Tennessee and Kentucky, and whereas these latter themselves subdued and drove out their foes, the former took but an insignificant part in the contest by which the possession of their land was secured. Besides, the strongest and most numerous Indian tribes were in the Southwest.

The Southwest developed its civilization on its own lines, for good and for ill; the Northwest was settled under the national ordinance of 1787, which absolutely determined its destiny, and thereby in the end also determined the destiny of the whole nation. Moreover, the Gulf coast, as well as the interior, from the Mississippi to the Pacific, was held by foreign powers; while in the North this was only true of the country between the Ohio and the Great Lakes during the first years of the Revolution, until the Kentucky backwoodsmen conquered it. Our rivals of European race had dwelt for generations along the lower Mississippi and the Rio Grande, in Florida, and in California, when we made them ours. Detroit, Vincennes, St. Louis, and New Orleans, St. Augustine, San Antonio, Santa Fé, and San Francisco are cities that were built by Frenchmen or Spaniards; we did not found them, but conquered them. All but the first two are in the Southwest, and of these two, one was first taken and governed by southwesterners. On the other hand, the northwestern cities, from Cincinnati and Chicago to Helena and Portland,

were founded by our own people, by the people who now have possession of them.

The Southwest was conquered only after years of hard fighting with the original owners. The way in which this was done bears much less resemblance to the sudden filling up of Australia and California by the practically unopposed overflow from a teeming and civilized mother country, than it does to the original English conquest of Britain itself. The warlike borderers who thronged across the Alleghanies, the restless and reckless hunters, the hard, dogged, frontier farmers, by dint of grim tenacity, overcame and displaced Indians, French, and Spaniards alike, exactly as, fourteen hundred years before, Saxon and Angle had overcome and displaced the Cymric and Gaelic Celts. They were led by no one commander; they acted under orders from neither king nor congress; they were not carrying out the plans of any far-sighted leader. In obedience to the instincts working half blindly within their breasts, spurred ever onward by the fierce desires of their eager hearts, they made in the wilderness homes for their children, and by so doing wrought out the destinies of a continental nation. They warred and settled from the high hill valleys of the French Broad and the upper Cumberland to the half-tropical basin of the Rio Grande, and to where the Golden Gate lets through the long-heaving waters of the Pacific. The story of how this was done forms a compact and continuous whole. The fathers followed Boone or fought at King's Mountain; the sons marched south with Jackson to overcome the Creeks and beat back the British; the grandsons died at the Alamo or charged to victory at San Jacinto. They were doing their share of a work that began with the conquest of Britain, that entered

on its second and wider period after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, that culminated in the marvellous growth of the United States. The winning of the West and Southwest is a stage in the conquest of a continent.

CHAPTER II

THE FRENCH OF THE OHIO VALLEY

1763–1775

The result of England's last great colonial struggle with France was to sever from the latter all her American dependencies, her colonists becoming the subjects of alien and rival powers. England won Canada and the Ohio valley; while France ceded to her Spanish allies Louisiana, including therein all the territory vaguely bounded by the Mississippi and the Pacific. As an offset to this gain, Spain had herself lost to England both Floridas, as the coast regions between Georgia and Louisiana were then called.

Thus the thirteen colonies, at the outset of their struggle for independence, saw themselves surrounded, north, south, and west, by lands where the rulers and the ruled were of different races, but where rulers and ruled alike were hostile to the new people that was destined in the end to master them all.

The present Province of Quebec, then called Canada, was already, what she has to this day remained, a French state acknowledging the English king as her overlord. Her interests did not conflict with those of our people, nor touch them in any way, and she has had little to do with our national history, and nothing whatever to do with the history of the West.

In the peninsula of East Florida, in the land of the cypress, palmetto, and live-oak, of open savannas, of sandy pine forests, and impenetrable, interminable

morasses, a European civilization more ancient than any in the English colonies was mouldering in slow decay. Its capital city was quaint St. Augustine, the old walled town that was founded by the Spaniards long years before the keel of the *Half-Moon* furrowed the broad Hudson, or the ships of the Puritans sighted the New England coast. In times past St. Augustine had once and again seen her harbor filled with the huge, cumbrous hulls, and whitened by the bellying sails, of the Spanish war-vessels, when the fleets of the Catholic king gathered there, before setting out against the seaboard towns of Georgia and the Carolinas; and she had to suffer from and repulse the retaliatory inroads of the English colonists. Once her priests and soldiers had brought the Indian tribes, far and near, under subjection, and had dotted the wilderness with fort and church and plantation, the outposts of her dominion; but that was long ago, and the tide of Spanish success had turned and begun to ebb many years before the English took possession of Florida. The Seminoles, fierce and warlike, whose warriors fought on foot and on horseback, had avenged in countless bloody forays their fellow Indian tribes, whose very names had perished under Spanish rule. The churches and forts had crumbled into nothing; only the cannon and the brazen bells, half buried in the rotting mould, remained to mark the place where once stood spire and citadel. The deserted plantations, the untravelled causeways, no longer marred the face of the tree-clad land, for even their sites had ceased to be distinguishable; the great highroad that led to Pensacola had faded away, overgrown by the rank luxuriance of the semitropical forest. Throughout the interior the painted savages roved at will, uncontrolled by Spaniard or Englishman, owing allegiance

only to the White Chief of Tallasotchee.[1] St. Augustine, with its British garrison and its Spanish and Minorcan townsfolk,[2] was still a gathering-place for a few Indian traders, and for the scattered fishermen of the coast; elsewhere there were in all not more than a hundred families.[3]

Beyond the Chattahooche and the Appalachicola, stretching thence to the Mississippi and its delta, lay the more prosperous region of West Florida.[4] Although taken by the English from Spain, there were few Spaniards among the people, who were controlled by the scanty British garrisons at Pensacola, Mobile, and Natchez. On the Gulf coast the inhabitants were mainly French creoles. They were an indolent, pleasure-loving race, fond of dancing and merriment, living at ease in their low, square, roomy houses on the straggling, rudely farmed plantations that lay along the river-banks. Their black slaves worked for them; they themselves spent much of their time in fishing and fowling. Their favorite arm was the light fowling-piece, for they were expert wing-shots;[5] unlike the American backwoodsman, who knew nothing of shooting on the wing, and looked down on smooth-bores, caring only for the rifle, the true weapon of the freeman. In winter, the creoles took their negroes to the hills, where they made

[1] "Travels by William Bartram," Philadelphia, 1791, pp. 184, 231, 232, etc. The various Indian names are spelled in a dozen different ways.

[2] "Reise," etc. (in 1783 and 1784), by Johann David Schöpf, 1788, II, 362. The Minorcans were the most numerous and prosperous; then came the Spaniards, with a few creoles, English, and Germans.

[3] J. D. F. Smyth, "Tour in the United States" (1775), London, 1784, II, 35.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] *Mémoire ou Coup-d'Œil Rapide sur mes différentes voyages et mon séjour dans la nation Crëck, par Le Gal. Milfort, Tastanégy ou grand chef de guerre de la nation Crëck et Général de Brigade au service de la République Française,* Paris, 1802. Writing in 1781, he said Mobile contained about forty proprietary families, and was *un petit paradis terrestre.*

tar from the pitch-pine, and this they exported, as well as indigo, rice, tobacco, bear's oil, peltry, oranges, and squared timber. Cotton was grown, but only for home use. The British soldiers dwelt in stockaded forts, mounting light cannon; the governor lived in the high stone castle built of old by the Spaniards at Pensacola.[1]

In the part of West Florida lying along the east bank of the Mississippi, there were also some French creoles and a few Spaniards, with, of course, negroes and Indians to boot. But the population consisted mainly of Americans from the old colonies, who had come thither by sea in small sailing vessels, or had descended the Ohio and the Tennessee in flatboats, or, perchance, had crossed the Creek country with pack-ponies, following the narrow trails of the Indian traders. With them were some English and Scotch, and the Americans themselves had little sympathy with the colonies, feeling, instead, a certain dread and dislike of the rough Carolinian mountaineers, who were their nearest white neighbors on the east.[2] They therefore, for the most part, remained loyal to the Crown in the Revolutionary struggle, and suffered accordingly.

When Louisiana was ceded to Spain, most of the French creoles who formed her population were clustered together in the delta of the Mississippi; the rest were scattered out here and there, in a thin, dotted line, up the left bank of the river to the Missouri, near the mouth of which there were several small villages: St. Louis, St. Geneviève, St. Charles.[3] A strong Spanish garrison held New Orleans, where the creoles, discontented with their new masters, had once risen in a re-

[1] Bartram, 407.

[2] *Magazine of American History*, IV, 388. Letter of a New England settler in 1773.

[3] "Annals of St. Louis," Frederic L. Billon, St. Louis, 1886. A valuable book.

volt that was speedily quelled and severely punished. Small garrisons were also placed in the different villages.

Our people had little to do with either Florida or Louisiana until after the close of the Revolutionary War; but very early in that struggle, and soon after the movement west of the mountains began, we were thrown into contact with the French of the Northwestern Territory, and the result was of the utmost importance to the future welfare of the whole nation.

This northwestern land lay between the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Great Lakes. It now constitutes five of our large States and part of a sixth. But when independence was declared it was quite as much a foreign territory, considered from the standpoint of the old thirteen colonies, as Florida or Canada; the difference was that, whereas during the war we failed in our attempts to conquer Florida and Canada, we succeeded in conquering the Northwest. The Northwest formed no part of our country as it originally stood; it had no portion in the Declaration of Independence. It did not revolt; it was conquered. Its inhabitants, at the outset of the Revolution, no more sympathized with us, and felt no greater inclination to share our fate, than did their kinsmen in Quebec or the Spaniards in St. Augustine. We made our first important conquest during the Revolution itself—beginning thus early what was to be our distinguishing work for the next seventy years.

These French settlements, which had been founded about the beginning of the century, when the English still clung to the estuaries of the seaboard, were grouped in three clusters, separated by hundreds of miles of wilderness. One of these clusters, containing something like a third of the total population, was at the

straits, around Detroit.[1] It was the seat of the British power in that section, and remained in British hands for twenty years after we had become a nation.

The other two were linked together by their subsequent history, and it is only with them that we have to deal. The village of Vincennes lay on the eastern bank of the Wabash, with two or three smaller villages tributary to it in the country roundabout; and to the west, beside the Mississippi, far above where it is joined by the Ohio, lay the so-called Illinois towns, the villages of Kaskaskia and Cahokia, with between them the little settlements of Prairie du Rocher and St. Philip.[2]

Both these groups of old French hamlets were in the fertile prairie region of what is now southern Indiana and Illinois. We have taken into our language the word prairie, because when our backwoodsmen first reached the land and saw the great natural meadows of long grass—sights unknown to the gloomy forests wherein they had always dwelt—they knew not what to call them, and borrowed the term already in use among the French inhabitants.

The great prairies, level or rolling, stretched from north to south, separated by broad belts of high timber. Here and there copses of woodland lay like islands in

[1] In the Haldimand MSS., Series B, vol. CXXII, p. 2, is a census of Detroit itself, taken in 1773 by Philip Dejean, justice of the peace. According to this there were 1,367 souls, of whom 85 were slaves; they dwelt in 280 houses, with 157 barns, and owned 1,494 horned cattle, 628 sheep, and 1,067 hogs. Acre is used as a measure of length; their united farms had a frontage of 512, and went back from 40 to 80. Some of the people, it is specified, were not enumerated because they were out hunting or trading at the Indian villages. Besides the slaves, there were 93 servants.

This only refers to the settlers of Detroit proper, and the farms adjoining. Of the numerous other farms, and the small villages on both sides of the straits, and of the many families and individuals living as traders or trappers with the Indians, I can get no good record. Perhaps the total population tributary to Detroit was 2,000. It may have been over this. Any attempt to estimate this creole population perforce contains much guesswork.

[2] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. III, p. 89.

the sunny seas of tall, waving grass. Where the rivers ran, their alluvial bottoms were densely covered with trees and underbrush, and were often overflowed in the spring freshets. Sometimes the prairies were long, narrow strips of meadowland; again, they were so broad as to be a day's journey across, and to the American, bred in a wooded country where the largest openings were the beaver meadows and the clearings of the frontier settlers, the stretches of grass-land seemed limitless. They abounded in game. The buffalo crossed and recrossed them, wandering to and fro in long files, beating narrow trails that they followed year in and year out; while bear, elk, and deer dwelt in the groves around the borders.[1]

There were, perhaps, some four thousand inhabitants in these French villages, divided almost equally between those in the Illinois and those along the Wabash.[2]

The country came into the possession of the British —not of the colonial English or Americans—at the close of Pontiac's war, the aftermath of the struggle which decided against the French the ownership of America. It was held as a new British province, not as an extension of any of the old colonies; and finally, in 1774, by

[1] *Ibid.*, Harmar's letter.

[2] State Department MSS., No. 30, p. 453. Memorial of François Carbonneaux, agent for the inhabitants of the Illinois country, December 8, 1784. "Four hundred families [in the Illinois] exclusive of a like number at Post Vincent" [Vincennes]. Americans had then just begun to come in, but this enumeration did not refer to them. The population had decreased during the Revolutionary War; so that at its outbreak there were probably altogether a thousand families. They were very prolific, and four to a family is probably not too great an allowance, even when we consider that in such a community on the frontier there are always plenty of solitary adventurers. Moreover, there were a number of negro slaves. Harmar's letter of November 24, 1787, states the adult males of Kaskaskia and Cahokia at four hundred and forty, not counting those at St. Philip or Prairie du Rocher. This tallies very well with the preceding. But of course the number given can only be considered approximately accurate, and a passage in a letter of Lieutenant-Governor Hamilton would indicate that it was considerably smaller.

This letter is to be found in the Haldimand MSS., Series B, vol. CXXIII, p. 53;

the famous Quebec Act, it was rendered an appanage of Canada, governed from the latter. It is a curious fact that England immediately adopted toward her own colonists the policy of the very nationality she had ousted. From the date of the triumphant peace won by Wolfe's victory, the British Government became the most active foe of the spread of the English race in America. This position Britain maintained for many years after the failure of her attempt to bar her colonists out of the Ohio valley. It was the position she occupied when at Ghent in 1814 her commissioners tried to hem in the natural progress of her colonists' children by the erection of a great "neutral belt" of Indian Territory, guaranteed by the British king. It was the rôle which her statesmen endeavored to make her play when, at a later date, they strove to keep Oregon a waste rather than see it peopled by Americans.

In the Northwest she succeeded to the French policy as well as the French position. She wished the land to remain a wilderness, the home of the trapper and the fur trader, of the Indian hunter and the French *voyageur*. She desired it to be kept as a barrier against the growth of the seaboard colonies toward the interior. She regarded the new lands across the Atlantic as being won and settled, not for the benefit of the men who won and settled them, but for the benefit of the merchants

it is the "brief account" of his ill-starred expedition against Vincennes. He says: "On taking an account of the Inhabitants of this place [Vincennes], of all ages and sexes, we found their number to amount to 621; of this 217 fit to bear arms on the spot, several being absent hunting Buffaloe for their winter provision." But elsewhere in the same letter he alludes to the adult arms-bearing men as being three hundred in number, and of course the outlying farms and small tributary villages are not counted in. This was in December, 1778. Possibly some families had left for the Spanish possessions after the war broke out, and returned after it was ended. But as all observers seem to unite in stating that the settlements either stood still or went backward during the Revolutionary struggle, it is somewhat difficult to reconcile the figures of Hamilton and Carbonneaux.

and traders who stayed at home. It was this that rendered the Revolution inevitable; the struggle was a revolt against the whole mental attitude of Britain in regard to America, rather than against any one special act or set of acts. The sins and shortcomings of the colonists had been many, and it would be easy to make out a formidable catalogue of grievances against them, on behalf of the mother country; but on the great underlying question they were wholly in the right, and their success was of vital consequence to the well-being of the race on this continent.

Several of the old colonies urged vague claims to parts of the Northwestern Territory, basing them on ancient charters and Indian treaties; but the British heeded them no more than the French had, and they were very little nearer fulfilment after the defeat of Montcalm and Pontiac than before. The French had held adverse possession in spite of them for sixty years; the British held similar possession for fifteen more. The mere statement of the facts is enough to show the intrinsic worthlessness of the titles. The Northwest was acquired from France by Great Britain through conquest and treaty; in a precisely similar way—Clark taking the place of Wolfe—it was afterward won from Britain by the United States. We gained it exactly as we afterward gained Louisiana, Florida, Oregon, California, New Mexico, and Texas—partly by arms, partly by diplomacy, partly by the sheer growth and pressure of our spreading population. The fact that the conquest took place just after we had declared ourselves a free nation, and while we were still battling to maintain our independence, does not alter its character in the least; but it has sufficed to render the whole transaction very hazy in the minds of most subsequent historians, who

generally speak as if the Northwest Territory had been part of our original possessions.

The French who dwelt in the land were at the time little affected by the change which transferred their allegiance from one European king to another. They were accustomed to obey, without question, the orders of their superiors. They accepted the results of the war submissively, and yielded a passive obedience to their new rulers.[1] Some became rather attached to the officers who came among them; others grew rather to dislike them; most felt merely a vague sentiment of distrust and repulsion, alike for the haughty British officer in his scarlet uniform, and for the reckless backwoodsman clad in tattered homespun or buckskin. They remained the owners of the villages, the tillers of the soil. At first few English or American immigrants, save an occasional fur trader, came to live among them. But their doom was assured; their rule was at an end forever. For a while they were still to compose the bulk of the scanty population; but nowhere were they again to sway their own destinies. In after-years they fought for and against both whites and Indians; they faced each other, ranged beneath the rival banners of Spain, England, and the insurgent colonists; but they never again fought for their old flag or for their own sovereignty.

From the overthrow of Pontiac to the outbreak of the Revolution, the settlers in the Illinois and round Vincennes lived in peace under their old laws and customs, which were continued by the British comman-

[1] In the Haldimand MSS., Series B, vol. CXXII, p. 3, the letter of M. Ste. Marie from Vincennes, May 3, 1774, gives utterance to the general feeling of the creoles, when he announces, in promising in their behalf to carry out the orders of the British commandant, that he is *remplie de respect pour tout ce qui porte l'emprinte de l'otorité [sic l]*.

dants.[1] They had been originally governed, in the same way that Canada was, by the laws of France, adapted, however, to the circumstances of the new country. Moreover, they had local customs which were as binding as the laws. After the conquest the British commandants who came in acted as civil judges also. All public transactions were recorded in French by notaries public. Orders issued in English were translated into French so that they might be understood. Criminal cases were referred to England. Before the conquest the *procureur du roi* gave sentence by his own personal decision in civil cases; if the matters were important, it was the custom for each party to name two arbitrators, and the *procureur du roi* a fifth; while an appeal might be made to the *conseil supérieur* at New Orleans. The British commandant assumed the place of the *procureur du roi*, although there were one or two half-hearted efforts made to introduce the Common Law.

The original French commandants had exercised the power of granting to every person who petitioned as much land as the petitioner chose to ask for, subject to the condition that part of it should be cultivated within a year, under penalty of its reversion to "the king's demesnes." [2] The English followed the same custom. A large quantity of land was reserved in the neighborhood of each village for the common use, and a very small quantity for religious purposes. The common was generally a large patch of enclosed prairie, part of it being cultivated, and the remainder serving as a pasture for the cattle of the inhabitants.[3] The portion of

[1] State Department MSS., No. 48, p. 51. Statement of M. Cerré (or Carré), July, 1786, translated by John Pintard.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 41. Petition of J. B. La Croix, A. Girardin, etc., dated "at Cohoe in the Illinois 15th July, 1786."

the common set aside for agriculture was divided into strips of one arpent in front by forty in depth, and one or more allotted to each inhabitant according to his skill and industry as a cultivator.[1] The arpent, as used by the western French, was a rather rough measure of surface, less in size than an acre.[2] The farms held by private ownership likewise ran back in long strips from a narrow front that usually lay along some stream.[3] Several of them generally lay parallel to one another, each including something like a hundred acres, but occasionally much exceeding this amount.

The French inhabitants were in very many cases not of pure blood. The early settlements had been made by men only—by soldiers, traders, and trappers, who took Indian wives. They were not trammelled by the queer pride which makes a man of English stock unwilling to make a red-skinned woman his wife, though anxious enough to make her his concubine. Their children were baptized in the little parish churches by the black-robed priests, and grew up holding the same position in the community as was held by their fellows, both of whose parents were white. But, in addition to these free citizens, the richer inhabitants owned both red and black slaves; negroes imported from Africa, or Indians overcome and taken in battle.[4] There were many freedmen and freedwomen of both colors, and, in consequence, much mixture of blood.

[1] Billon, 91.

[2] An arpent of land was 180 French feet square. MS. copy of Journal of Matthew Clarkson in 1766. In Durrett collection.

[3] *American State Papers*, Public Lands, I, 11.

[4] Fergus Historical Series, No. 12, "Illinois in the 18th Century." Edward G. Mason, Chicago, 1881. A most excellent number of an excellent series. The old parish registers of Kaskaskia, going back to 1695, contain some remarkable names of the Indian mothers—such as Maria Aramipinchicoue and Domitilla Tehuigouanakigaboucoue. Sometimes the man is only distinguished by some such title as "The Parisian," or "The Bohemian."

They were tillers of the soil, and some followed, in addition, the trades of blacksmith and carpenter. Very many of them were trappers or fur traders. Their money was composed of furs and peltries, rated at a fixed price per pound;[1] none other was used unless expressly so stated in the contract. Like the French of Europe, their unit of value was the livre, nearly equivalent to the modern franc. They were not very industrious, nor very thrifty husbandmen. Their farming implements were rude, their methods of cultivation simple and primitive, and they themselves were often lazy and improvident. Near their town they had great orchards of gnarled apple-trees, planted by their forefathers when they came from France, and old pear-trees, of a kind unknown to the Americans; but their fields often lay untilled, while the owners lolled in the sunshine smoking their pipes. In consequence, they were sometimes brought to sore distress for food, being obliged to pluck their corn while it was still green.[2]

The pursuits of the fur trader and fur trapper were far more congenial to them, and it was upon these that they chiefly depended. The half-savage life of toil, hardship, excitement, and long intervals of idleness attracted them strongly. This was perhaps one among the reasons why they got on so much better with the Indians than did the Americans, who, wherever they went, made clearings and settlements, cut down the trees, and drove off the game.

But even these pursuits were followed under the ancient customs and usages of the country, leave to travel and trade being first obtained from the commandant;[3] for the rule of the commandant was al-

[1] Billon, 90. [2] Letter of P. A. Laforge, December 31, 1786. Billon, 268.
[3] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. III, p. 519. Letter of Joseph St. Marin, August 23, 1788.

most patriarchal. The inhabitants were utterly unacquainted with what the Americans called liberty. When they passed under our rule, it was soon found that it was impossible to make them understand such an institution as trial by jury; they throve best under the form of government to which they had been immemorially accustomed—a commandant to give them orders, with a few troops to back him up.[1] They often sought to escape from these orders, but rarely to defy them; their lawlessness was like the lawlessness of children and savages; any disobedience was always to a particular ordinance, not to the system.

The trader having obtained his permit, built his boats —whether light, roomy bateaux made of boards, or birch-bark canoes, or pirogues, which were simply hollowed-out logs. He loaded them with paint, powder, bullets, blankets, beads, and rum, manned them with hardy *voyageurs*, trained all their lives in the use of pole and paddle, and started off up or down the Mississippi,[2] the Ohio, or the Wabash, perhaps making a long carry or portage over into the Great Lakes. It took him weeks, often months, to get to the first trading-point, usually some large winter encampment of Indians. He might visit several of these, or stay the whole winter through at one, buying the furs.[3] Many of the French *coureurs des bois*, whose duty it was to traverse the wilderness, and who were expert trappers, took up their abode with the Indians, taught them how to catch the sable, fisher, otter, and beaver, and lived among them as members of the tribe, marrying copper-colored squaws, and rearing dusky children. When the trader had exchanged his goods for the peltries of these red

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 89. Harmar's letter.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 519. Letter of Joseph St. Marin.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 89.

and white skin-hunters, he returned to his home, having been absent perhaps a year or eighteen months. It was a hard life; many a trader perished in the wilderness by cold or starvation, by an upset where the icy current ran down the rapids like a mill-race, by the attack of a hostile tribe, or even in a drunken brawl with the friendly Indians, when *voyageur*, half-breed, and Indian alike had been frenzied by draughts of fiery liquor.[1]

Next to the commandant, in power, came the priest. He bore unquestioned rule over his congregation, but only within certain limits; for the French of the backwoods, leavened by the presence among them of so many wild and bold spirits, could not be treated quite in the same way as the more peaceful *habitants* of Lower Canada. The duty of the priest was to look after the souls of his sovereign's subjects, to baptize, marry, and bury them, to confess and absolve them, and keep them from backsliding, to say mass, and to receive the salary due him for celebrating divine service; but, though his personal influence was, of course, very great, he had no temporal authority, and could not order his people either to fight or to work. Still less could he dispose of their land, a privilege inhering only in the commandant and in the commissaries of the villages, where they were expressly authorized so to do by the sovereign.[2]

The average inhabitant, though often loose in his morals, was very religious. He was superstitious also, for he firmly believed in omens, charms, and witchcraft, and when worked upon by his dread of the unseen and

[1] Journal of Jean Baptiste Perrault, 1783; in "Indian Tribes," by Henry R. Schoolcraft, Part III, Philadelphia, 1855. See also Billon, 484, for an interesting account of the adventures of Gratiot, who afterward, under American rule, built up a great fur business, and drove a flourishing trade with Europe, as well as the towns of the American seaboard.

[2] State Department MSS., No. 48, p. 25. A petition concerning a case in point, affecting the priest Gibault.

the unknown, he sometimes did terrible deeds, as will be related farther on.

Under ordinary circumstances he was a good-humored, kindly man, always polite—his manners offering an agreeable contrast to those of some of our own frontiersmen—with a ready smile and laugh, and ever eager to join in any merrymaking. On Sundays and fast-days he was summoned to the little parish church by the tolling of the old bell in the small wooden belfry. The church was a rude oblong building, the walls made out of peeled logs, thrust upright in the ground, chinked with moss and coated with clay or cement. Thither every man went, clad in a capote or blanket coat, a bright silk handkerchief knotted round his head, and his feet shod with moccasins or strong raw-hide sandals. If young, he walked or rode a shaggy pony; if older, he drove his creaking, springless wooden cart, untired and unironed, in which his family sat on stools.[1]

The grades of society were much more clearly marked than in similar communities of our own people. The gentry, although not numerous, possessed unquestioned social and political headship and were the military leaders; although, of course, they did not have anything like such marked pre-eminence of position as in Quebec or New Orleans, where the conditions were more like

[1] "History of Vincennes," by Judge John Law, Vincennes, 1858, pp. 18 and 140. They are just such carts as I have seen myself in the valley of the Red River, and in the big bend of the Missouri, carrying all the worldly goods of their owners, the French Métis. These Métis—ex-trappers, ex-buffalo runners, and small farmers—are the best representatives of the old French of the West; they are a little less civilized, they have somewhat more Indian blood in their veins, but they are substantially the same people. It may be noted that the herds of buffaloes that during the last century thronged the plains of what are now the States of Illinois and Indiana furnished to the French of Kaskaskia and Vincennes their winter meat; exactly as during the present century the Saskatchewan Métis lived on the wild herds until they were exterminated.

those obtaining in the Old World. There was very little education. The common people were rarely versed in the mysteries of reading and writing,[1] and even the wives of the gentry were often only able to make their marks instead of signing their names.

The little villages in which they dwelt were pretty places,[2] with wide, shaded streets. The houses lay far apart, often a couple of hundred feet from one another. They were built of heavy hewn timbers; those of the better sort were furnished with broad verandas, and contained large, low-ceilinged rooms, the high mantelpieces and the mouldings of the doors and windows being made of curiously carved wood. Each village was defended by a palisaded fort and blockhouses, and was occasionally itself surrounded by a high wooden stockade. The inhabitants were extravagantly fond of music and dancing;[3] marriages and christenings were seasons of merriment, when the fiddles were scraped all night long, while the moccasined feet danced deftly in time to the music.

Three generations of isolated life in the wilderness had greatly changed the characters of these groups of traders, trappers, bateau-men, and adventurous warriors. It was inevitable that they should borrow many traits from their savage friends and neighbors. Hospitable, but bigoted to their old customs, ignorant, indolent, and given to drunkenness, they spoke a corrupt

[1] See the lists of signatures in the State Department MSS., also Mason's Kaskaskia Parish Records and Law's "Vincennes." As an example: the wife of the Chevalier Vinsenne (who gave his name to Vincennes, and afterward fell in the battle where the Chickasaws routed the northern French and their Indian allies) was only able to make her mark.

Clark in his letters several times mentions the "gentry" in terms that imply their standing above the rest of the people.

[2] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. III, p. 89.

[3] Journal of Jean Baptiste Perrault, 1783.

jargon of the French tongue; the common people were even beginning to give up reckoning time by months and years, and dated events, as the Indians did, with reference to the phenomena of nature, such as the time of the floods, the maturing of the green corn, or the ripening of the strawberries.[1] All their attributes seemed alien to the polished army officers of old France;[2] they had but little more in common with the latter than with the American backwoodsmen. But they had kept many valuable qualities, and, in especial, they were brave and hardy, and, after their own fashion, good soldiers. They had fought valiantly beside King Louis's musketeers, and in alliance with the painted warriors of the forest; later on, they served, though perhaps with less heart, under the gloomy ensign of Spain, shared the fate of the red-coated grenadiers of King George, or followed the lead of the tall Kentucky riflemen.

[1] "Voyage en Amérique (1796)," General Victor Collot, Paris, 1804, p. 318.

[2] *Ibid.* Collot calls them "uncomposé de traiteurs, d'aventuriers, de coureurs de bois, rameurs, et de guerriers; ignorans, superstitieux et entêtés, qu'aucunes fatigues, aucunes privations, aucunes dangers ne peuvent arrêter dans leurs enterprises, qu'ils mettent toujours fin; ils n'ont conservé des vertus françaises que le courage."

CHAPTER III

THE APPALACHIAN CONFEDERACIES

1765–1775

When we declared ourselves an independent nation there were on our borders three groups of Indian peoples. The northernmost were the Iroquois or Six Nations, who dwelt in New York, and stretched down into Pennsylvania. They had been for two centuries the terror of every other Indian tribe east of the Mississippi, as well as of the whites; but their strength had already departed. They numbered only some ten or twelve thousand, all told, and though they played a bloody part in the Revolutionary struggle, it was merely as subordinate allies of the British. It did not lie in their power to strike a really decisive blow. Their chastisement did not result in our gaining new territory; nor would a failure to chastise them have affected the outcome of the war nor the terms of peace. Their fate was bound up with that of the king's cause in America and was decided wholly by events unconnected with their own success or defeat.

The very reverse was the case with the Indians, tenfold more numerous, who lived along our western frontier. There they were themselves our main opponents, the British simply acting as their supporters; and instead of their fate being settled by the treaty of peace with Britain, they continued an active warfare for twelve years after it had been signed. Had they defeated us in the early years of the contest, it is more than probable that the Alleghanies would have been

made our western boundary at the peace. We won from them vast stretches of territory because we had beaten their warriors, and we could not have won it otherwise; whereas the territory of the Iroquois was lost, not because of their defeat, but because of the defeat of the British.

There were two great groups of these Indians, the ethnic corresponding roughly with the geographic division. In the Northwest, between the Ohio and the Lakes, were the Algonquin tribes, generally banded loosely together; in the Southwest, between the Tennessee—then called the Cherokee—and the Gulf, the so-called Appalachians lived. Between them lay a vast and beautiful region where no tribe dared dwell, but into which all ventured now and then for war and hunting.

The southwestern Indians were called Appalachians by the olden writers, because this was the name then given to the southern Alleghanies. It is doubtful if the term has any exact racial significance; but it serves very well to indicate a number of Indian nations whose system of government, ways of life, customs, and general culture were much alike, and whose civilization was much higher than was that of most other American tribes.

The Appalachians were in the barbarous, rather than in the merely savage state. They were divided into five lax confederacies: the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks, and Seminoles. The latter were merely a southern offshoot of the Creeks or Muscogees. They were far more numerous than the northwestern Indians, were less nomadic, and, in consequence, had more definite possession of particular localities; so that their lands were more densely peopled.

In all they amounted to perhaps seventy thousand souls.[1] It is more difficult to tell the numbers of the different tribes; for the division lines between them were very ill defined, and were subject to wide fluctuations. Thus the Creeks, the most formidable of all, were made up of many bands, differing from each other both in race and speech. The language of the Chickasaws and Choctaws did not differ more from the tongue of the Cherokees than the two divisions of the latter did from each other. The Cherokees of the hills, the Otari, spoke a dialect that could not be understood by the Cherokees of the lowlands, or Erati. Towns or bands continually broke up and split off from their former associations, while ambitious and warlike chiefs kept forming new settlements, and, if successful, drew large numbers of young warriors from the older communities. Thus the boundary-lines between the confederacies were ever shifting.[2] Judging from a careful comparison of the

[1] Letters of Commissioners Hawkins, Pickens, Martin, and McIntosh to the President of the Continental Congress, December 2, 1785. (Given in Senate Documents, 33d Congress, 2d session, Boundary between Ga. and Fla.) They give 14,200 "gun-men," and say that "at a moderate calculation" there are four times as many old men, women, and children as there are gun-men. The estimates of the numbers are very numerous and very conflicting. After carefully consulting all accessible authorities, I have come to the conclusion that the above is probably pretty near the truth. It is the deliberate, official opinion of four trained experts, who had ample opportunities for investigation, and who examined the matter with care. But it is very possible that in allotting the several tribes their numbers they err now and then, as the boundaries between the tribes shifted continually, and there were always large communities of renegades, such as the Chickamaugas, who were drawn from the ranks of all.

[2] This is one of the main reasons why the estimates of their numbers vary so hopelessly. As a specimen case, among many others, compare the estimate of Professor Benjamin Smith Barton ("Origin of the Tribes and Nations of America," Philadelphia, 1798) with the report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1827. Barton estimated that in 1793 the Appalachian nations numbered in all 13,000 warriors; considering these as one-fifth of the total population, makes it 65,000. In 1837, the Commissioner reports their numbers at 65,304—almost exactly the same. Probably both statements are nearly correct, the natural rate of increase having just about offset the loss in consequence of a partial change of home, and of Jackson's slaughtering wars against the Creeks and Seminoles. But where they agree in the total, they vary hopelessly in the details. By Barton's estimate, the

different authorities, the following estimate of the numbers of the Southern tribes at the outbreak of the Revolution may be considered as probably approximately correct.

The Cherokees, some twelve thousand strong,[1] were the mountaineers of their race. They dwelt among the blue-topped ridges and lofty peaks of the southern Alleghanies,[2] in the wild and picturesque region where the present States of Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and the Carolinas join one another.

To the west of the Cherokees, on the banks of the Mississippi, were the Chickasaws, the smallest of the Southern nations, numbering at the outside but four thousand souls;[3] but they were also the bravest and most warlike, and of all these tribal confederacies theirs was the only one which was at all closely knit together. The whole tribe acted in unison. In consequence,

Cherokees numbered but 7,500, the Choctaws 30,000; by the Commissioner's census the Cherokees numbered 21,911, the Choctaws 15,000. It is of course out of the question to believe that while in forty-four years the Cherokees had increased threefold, the Choctaws had diminished one-half. The terms themselves must have altered their significance or else there was extensive intertribal migration. Similarly, according to the reports, the Creeks had increased by 4,000 — the Seminoles and Choctaws had diminished by 3,000.

[1] "American Archives," 4th Series, III, 790. Drayton's account, September 23, 1775. This was a carefully taken census, made by the Indian traders. Apart from the outside communities such as the Chickamaugas at a later date, there were:

737	gunmen	in the	10	overhill towns
908	"	"	23	middle "
356	"	"	9	lower "

a total of 2,001 warriors. The outlying towns, who had cast off their allegiance for the time being, would increase the amount by three or four hundred more.

[2] "History of the American Indians, Particularly Those Nations Adjoining to the Mississippi, East and West Florida, Georgia, South and North Carolina, and Virginia." By James Adair (an Indian trader and resident in the country for forty years), London, 1775. A very valuable book, but a good deal marred by the author's irrepressible desire to twist every Indian utterance, habit, and ceremony into a proof that they are descended from the Ten Lost Tribes. He gives the number of Cherokee warriors at 2,300.

[3] Hawkins, Pickens, Martin, and McIntosh, in their letter, give them 800 warriors; most other estimates make the number smaller.

though engaged in incessant warfare with the far more numerous Choctaws, Creeks, and Cherokees, they more than held their own against them all; besides having inflicted on the French two of the bloodiest defeats they ever suffered from Indians. Most of the remnants of the Natchez, the strange sun-worshippers, had taken refuge with the Chickasaws and become completely identified with them, when their own nationality was destroyed by the arms of New Orleans.

The Choctaws, the rudest and, historically, the least important of these Indians, lived south of the Chickasaws. They were probably rather less numerous than the Creeks.[1] Though accounted brave, they were treacherous and thievish, and were not as well armed as the others. They rarely made war or peace as a unit, parties frequently acting in conjunction with some of the rival European powers, or else joining in the plundering inroads made by the other Indians upon the white settlements. Beyond thus furnishing auxiliaries to our other Indian foes, they had little to do with our history.

The Muscogees or Creeks were the strongest of all. Their Southern bands, living in Florida, were generally considered as a separate confederacy, under the name of Seminoles. They numbered between twenty-five and thirty thousand souls,[2] three-fourths of them being the Muscogees proper, and the remainder Seminoles. They

[1] Almost all the early writers make them more numerous, Adair gives them 4,500 warriors, Hawkins 6,000. But much less seems to have been known about them than about the Creeks, Cherokees, and Chickasaws; and most early estimates of Indians were largest when made of the least-known tribes. Adair's statement is probably the most trustworthy. The first accurate census showed the Creeks to be more numerous.

[2] Hawkins, Pickens, etc., make them "at least" 27,000 in 1789; the Indian report for 1837 makes them 26,844. During the half-century they had suffered from devastating wars and forced removals, and had probably slightly decreased in number. In Adair's time their population was increasing.

dwelt south of the Cherokees and east of the Choctaws, adjoining the Georgians.

The Creeks and Cherokees were thus by their position the barrier tribes of the South, who had to stand the brunt of our advance, and who acted as a buffer between us and the French and Spaniards of the Gulf and the lower Mississippi. Their fate once decided, that of the Chickasaws and Choctaws inevitably followed.

The customs and the political and social systems of these two tribes were very similar; and those of their two western neighbors were merely ruder copies thereof. They were very much further advanced than were the Algonquin nations of the North.

Unlike most mountaineers, the Cherokees were not held to be very formidable fighters, when compared with their fellows of the lowlands.[1] In 1760 and 1761 they had waged a fierce war with the whites, had ravaged the Carolina borders, had captured British forts, and successfully withstood British armies; but though they had held their own in the field, it had been at the cost of ruinous losses. Since that period they had been engaged in long wars with the Chickasaws and Creeks, and had been worsted by both. Moreover, they had been much harassed by the Northern Indians. So they were steadily declining in power and numbers.[2]

Though divided linguistically into two races, speaking different dialects, the Otari and Erati, the political divisions did not follow the lines of language. There were three groups of towns, the upper, lower, and middle; and these groups often acted independently of one another. The upper towns lay for the most part on the Western Waters, as they were called by the Americans

[1] "American Archives," 5th Series, I, 95. Letter of Charles Lee.
[2] Adair, 227. Bartram, 390.

—the streams running into the Tennessee. Their inhabitants were known as Overhill Cherokees and were chiefly Otari; but the towns were none of them permanent, and sometimes shifted their positions, even changing from one group to another. The lower towns, inhabited by the Erati, lay in the flat lands of upper Georgia and South Carolina, and were the least important. The third group, larger than either of the others, and lying among the hills and mountains between them, consisted of the middle towns. Its borders were ill marked and were ever shifting.

Thus the towns of the Cherokees stretched from the high upland region, where rise the loftiest mountains of eastern America, to the warm, level, low country, the land of the cypress and the long-leafed pine. Each village stood by itself, in some fertile river-bottom, with around it apple-orchards and fields of maize. Like the other Southern Indians, the Cherokees were more industrious than their Northern neighbors, lived by tillage and agriculture as much as by hunting, and kept horses, hogs, and poultry. The oblong, story-high houses were made of peeled logs, mortised into each other and plastered with clay; while the roof was of chestnut bark or of big shingles. Near to each stood a small cabin, partly dug out of the ground, and in consequence very warm; to this the inmates retired in winter, for they were sensitive to cold. In the centre of each village stood the great council-house or rotunda, capable of containing the whole population; it was often thirty feet high, and sometimes stood on a raised mound of earth.[1]

The Cherokees were a bright, intelligent race, better fitted to follow the "white man's road" than any other

[1] Bartram, 365.

Indians. Like their neighbors, they were exceedingly fond of games of chance and skill, as well as of athletic sports. One of the most striking of their national amusements was the kind of ball-play from which we derive the game of lacrosse. The implements consisted of ball-sticks, or rackets, two feet long, strung with rawhide webbing, and of a deerskin ball, stuffed with hair, so as to be very solid, and about the size of a baseball. Sometimes the game was played by fixed numbers, sometimes by all the young men of a village; and there were often tournaments between different towns and even different tribes. The contests excited the most intense interest, were waged with desperate resolution, and were preceded by solemn dances and religious ceremonies; they were tests of tremendous physical endurance, and were often very rough, legs and arms being occasionally broken. The Choctaws were considered to be the best ball-players.[1]

The Cherokees were likewise fond of dances. Sometimes these were comic or lascivious, sometimes they were religious in their nature, or were undertaken prior to starting on the war trail. Often the dances of the young men and maidens were very picturesque. The girls, dressed in white, with silver bracelets and gorgets, and a profusion of gay ribbons, danced in a circle in two ranks; the young warriors, clad in their battle finery, danced in a ring around them; all moving in rhythmic step, as they kept time to the antiphonal chanting[2] and singing, the young men and girls responding alternately to each other.

The great confederacy of the Muscogees or Creeks, consisting of numerous tribes, speaking at least five distinct languages, lay in a well-watered land of small tim-

[1] Adair, Bartram.

[2] Bartram.

ber.[1] The rapid streams were bordered by narrow flats of rich soil, and were margined by cane-brakes and reed beds. There were fine open pastures, varied by sandy pine barrens, by groves of palmetto and magnolia, and by great swamps and cypress ponds. The game had been largely killed out, the elk and buffalo having been exterminated, and even the deer much thinned, and, in consequence, the hunting-parties were obliged to travel far into the uninhabited region to the northward in order to kill their winter supply of meat. But panthers, wolves, and bears still lurked in the gloomy fastnesses of the swamps and cane-brakes, whence they emerged at night to prey on the hogs and cattle. The bears had been exceedingly abundant at one time; so much so as to become one of the main props of the Creek larder, furnishing flesh, fat, and especially oil for cooking and other purposes; and so valued were they that the Indians hit upon the novel plan of preserving them, exactly as Europeans preserve deer and pheasants. Each town put aside a great tract of land, which was known as the "beloved bear ground,"[2] where the persimmons, haws, chestnuts, muscadines, and fox-grapes abounded, and let the bears dwell there unmolested, except at certain seasons, when they were killed in large numbers. However, cattle were found to be more profitable than bears, and the "beloved bear grounds" were by degrees changed into stock ranges.[3]

[1] "A Sketch of the Creek Country," Benjamin Hawkins. In Coll. Ga. Hist. Soc. Written in 1798, but not published till fifty years afterward.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

[3] The use of the word "beloved" by the Creeks was quite peculiar. It is evidently correctly translated, for Milfort likewise gives it as *bien aimé*. It was the title used for anything held in especial regard, whether for economic or supernatural reasons; and sometimes it was used as Western tribes use the word "medicine" at the present day. The old chiefs and conjurers were called the "beloved old men"; what in the West we would now call the "medicine squaws" were named the "beloved old women." It was often conferred upon the chief dignitaries of the whites in writing to them.

The Creeks had developed a very curious semicivilization of their own. They lived in many towns, of which the larger, or old towns, bore rule over the smaller,[1] and alone sent representatives to the general councils. Many of these were as large as any in the back counties of the colonies;[2] but they were shifted from time to time, as the game was totally killed off, and the land exhausted by the crops.[3] The soil then became covered by a growth of pines, and a so-called "old field" was formed. This method of cultivation was, after all, much like that of the Southern whites, and the "old fields," or abandoned plantations grown up with pines, were common in the colonies.

Many of the chiefs owned droves of horses and horned cattle, sometimes as many as five hundred head,[4] besides hogs and poultry; and some of them in addition had negro slaves. But the tillage of the land was accomplished by communal labor; and, indeed, the government, as well as the system of life, was in many respects a singular compound of communism and extreme individualism. The fields of rice, corn, tobacco, beans, and potatoes were sometimes rudely fenced in with split hickory poles, and were sometimes left unfenced, with huts or high scaffolds, where watchers kept guard. They were planted when the wild fruit was so ripe as to draw off the birds, and, while ripening, the swine were kept penned up and the horses were tethered with tough bark ropes. Pumpkins, melons, marshmallows, and sunflowers were often grown between the rows of corn. The planting was done on a given day, the whole town being summoned; no man was excepted or was allowed to go out hunting. The under head man supervised the work.[5]

[1] Hawkins, 37. [2] Bartram, 386. The Uchee town contained at least 1,500 people.
[3] *Ibid.* [4] Hawkins, 30. [5] *Ibid.*, 39; Adair, 408.

For food they used all these vegetables, as well as beef and pork, and venison stewed in bear's oil; they had hominy and corn cakes, and a cool drink made from honey and water,[1] besides another made from fermented corn, which tasted much like cider.[2] They sifted their flour in wickerwork sieves, and baked the bread in kettles or on broad thin stones. Moreover, they gathered the wild fruits, strawberries, grapes, and plums, in their season, and out of the hickory-nuts they made a thick, oily paste, called hickory milk.

Each town was built around a square, in which the old men lounged all day long, gossiping and wrangling. Fronting the square, and surrounding it, were the four long, low communal houses, eight feet high, sixteen feet deep, and forty to sixty in length. They were wooden frames, supported on pine posts, with roof-tree and rafters of hickory. Their fronts were open piazzas, their sides were lathed and plastered, sometimes with white marl, sometimes with reddish clay, and they had plank doors and were roofed neatly with cypress bark or clapboards. The eave boards were of soft poplar. The barrier towns, near white or Indian enemies, had log houses, with port-holes cut in the walls.

The communal houses were each divided into three rooms. The House of the Micos, or Chiefs and Head Men, was painted red, and fronted the rising sun; it was highest in rank. The Houses of the Warriors and the Beloved Men—this last being painted white—fronted south and north respectively, while the House of the Young People stood opposite that of the Micos. Each room was divided into two terraces; the one in front being covered with red mats, while that in the rear, a kind of raised dais or great couch, was strewn with skins.

[1] Bartram, 184.

[2] Milfort, 212.

They contained stools hewed out of poplar logs, and chests made of clapboards sewed together with buffalo thongs.[1]

The rotunda or council-house stood near the square on the highest spot in the village. It was round, and fifty or sixty feet across, with a high-peaked roof; the rafters were fastened with splints and covered with bark. A raised dais ran around the wall, strewed with mats and skins. Sometimes in the larger council-houses there were painted eagles, carved out of poplar wood, placed close to the red and white seats where the chiefs and warriors sat; or in front of the broad dais were great images of the full and the half moon, colored white or black; or rudely carved and painted figures of the panther, and of men with buffalo horns. The tribes held in reverence both the panther and the rattlesnake.

The corn-cribs, fowl-houses, and hothouses or dug-outs for winter use were clustered near the other cabins.

Although in tillage they used only the hoe, they had made much progress in some useful arts. They spun the coarse wool of the buffalo into blankets, which they trimmed with beads. They wove the wild hemp in frames and shuttles. They made their own saddles. They made beautiful baskets of fine cane splints, and very handsome blankets of turkey feathers; while out of glazed clay they manufactured bowls, pitchers, platters, and other pottery.

In summer they wore buckskin shirts and breech-clouts; in winter they were clad in the fur of the bear and wolf, or of the shaggy buffalo. They had moccasins of elk or buffalo hide, and high thigh-boots of thin deer-skin, ornamented with fawns' trotters, or turkey spurs that tinkled as they walked. In their hair they braided

[1] Hawkins, 67. Milfort, 203. Bartram, 386. Adair, 418.

eagle-plumes, hawk-wings, or the brilliant plumage of the tanager and redbird. Trousers or breeches of any sort they despised as marks of effeminacy.

Vermilion was their war emblem; white was only worn at the time of the Green-Corn Dance. In each town stood the war-pole or painted post, a small peeled tree trunk colored red. Some of their villages were called white or peace towns; others red or bloody towns. The white towns were sacred to peace; no blood could be spilled within their borders. They were towns of refuge, where not even an enemy taken in war could be slain; and a murderer who fled thither was safe from vengeance. The captives were tortured to death in the red towns, and it was in these that the chiefs and warriors gathered when they were planning or preparing for war.

They held great marriage feasts; the dead were burned with the goods they had owned in their lifetime.

Every night all the people of a town gathered in the council-house to dance and sing and talk. Besides this, they held there on stated occasions the ceremonial dances; such were the dances of war and of triumph, when the warriors, painted red and black, returned, carrying the scalps of their slain foes on branches of evergreen pine, while they chanted the sonorous song of victory; and such was the Dance of the Serpent, the dance of lawless love, where the women and young girls were allowed to do whatsoever they listed.

Once a year, when the fruits ripened, they held the Green-Corn Dance, a religious festival that lasted eight days in the larger towns and four in the smaller. Then they fasted and feasted alternately. They drank out of conch-shells the Black Drink, a bitter beverage brewed

from the crushed leaves of a small shrub. On the third day the high priest or fire-maker, the man who sat in the white seat, clad in snowy tunic and moccasins, kindled the holy fire, fanning it into flames with the unsullied wing of a swan, and burning therein offerings of the first-fruits of the year. Dance followed dance. The beloved men and beloved women, the priest and priestesses, danced in three rings, singing the solemn song of which the words were never uttered at any other time; and at the end the warriors, in their wild war-gear, with white-plume head-dresses, took part, and also the women and girls, decked in their best, with earrings and armlets, and terrapin shells filled with pebbles fastened to the outside of their legs. They kept time with foot and voice, the men in deep tones, with short accents, the women in a shrill falsetto; while the clay drums, with heads of taut deer-hide, were beaten, the whistles blown, and the gourds and calabashes rattled, until the air resounded with the deafening noise.[1]

Though they sometimes burnt their prisoners and violated captive women, they generally were more merciful than the Northern tribes.[2]

But their political and military systems could not compare with those of the Algonquins, still less with those of the Iroquois. Their confederacy was of the loosest kind. There was no central authority. Every town acted just as it pleased, making war or peace with the other towns, or with whites, Choctaws, or Cherokees. In each there was a nominal head for peace and war, the high chief and the head warrior; the former was supposed to be supreme, and was elected for life from some one powerful family—as, for instance, the families having for their totems the wind or the eagle.

[1] Hawkins and Adair, *passim*.

[2] *Ibid.* Also *vide* Bartram.

But these chiefs had little control, and could not do much more than influence or advise their subjects; they were dependent on the will of the majority. Each town was a little hotbed of party spirit; the inhabitants divided on almost every question. If the head chief was for peace, but the war-chief nevertheless went on the war-path, there was no way of restraining him. It was said that never, in the memory of the oldest inhabitant, had half the nation "taken the war talk" at the same time.[1] As a consequence, war-parties of Creeks were generally merely small bands of marauders in search of scalps and plunder. In proportion to its numbers, the nation never, until 1813, undertook such formidable military enterprises as were undertaken by the Wyandots, Shawnees, and Delawares; and, though very formidable individual fighters, even in this respect it may be questioned if the Creeks equalled the prowess of their Northern kinsmen.

Yet when the Revolutionary War broke out, the Creeks were under a chieftain whose consummate craft and utterly selfish but cool and masterly diplomacy enabled them for a generation to hold their own better than any other native race against the restless Americans. This was the half-breed Alexander McGillivray, perhaps the most gifted man who was ever born on the soil of Alabama.[2]

His father was a Scotch trader, Lachlan McGillivray by name, who came when a boy to Charleston, then the headquarters of the commerce carried on by the British with the Southern Indians. On visiting the traders' quarter of the town, the young Scot was strongly at-

[1] Hawkins, 29, 70. Adair, 428.

[2] "History of Alabama," by Albert James Pickett, Charleston, 1851, II, 30. A valuable work.

tracted by the sight of the weather-beaten packers, with their gaudy, half-Indian finery, their hundreds of pack-horses, their curious pack-saddles, and their bales of merchandise. Taking service with them, he was soon helping to drive a pack-train along one of the narrow trails that crossed the lonely pine wilderness. To strong, coarse spirits, that were both shrewd and daring, and willing to balance the great risks incident to their mode of life against its great gains, the business was most alluring. Young Lachlan rose rapidly, and soon became one of the richest and most influential traders in the Creek country.

Like most traders, he married into the tribe, wooing and wedding, at the Hickory Ground, beside the Coosa River, a beautiful half-breed girl, Sehoy Marchand, whose father had been a French officer, and whose mother belonged to the powerful Creek family of the Wind. There were born to them two daughters and one son, Alexander. All the traders, though facing danger at every moment, from the fickle and jealous temper of the savages, wielded immense influence over them, and none more than the elder McGillivray, a far-sighted, unscrupulous Scotchman, who sided alternately with the French and English interests, as best suited his own policy and fortunes.

His son was felt by the Creeks to be one of themselves. He was born about 1746, at Little Tallasee, on the banks of the clear-flowing Coosa, where he lived till he was fourteen years old, playing, fishing, hunting, and bathing with the other Indian boys, and listening to the tales of the old chiefs and warriors. He was then taken to Charleston, where he was well educated, being taught Greek and Latin, as well as English history and literature. Tall, dark, slender, with commanding figure and

immovable face, of cool, crafty temper, with great ambition and a keen intellect, he felt himself called to play no common part. He disliked trade, and at the first opportunity returned to his Indian home. He had neither the moral nor the physical gifts requisite for a warrior; but he was a consummate diplomat, a born leader, and perhaps the only man who could have used aright such a rope of sand as was the Creek confederacy.

The Creeks claimed him as of their own blood, and instinctively felt that he was their only possible ruler. He was forthwith chosen to be their head chief. From that time on he remained among them, at one or the other of his plantations, his largest and his real home being at Little Tallasee, where he lived in barbaric comfort, in a great roomy log house with a stone chimney, surrounded by the cabins of his sixty negro slaves. He was supported by many able warriors, both of the half and the full blood. One of them is worthy of passing mention. This was a young French adventurer, Milfort, who, in 1776, journeyed through the insurgent colonies, and became an adopted son of the Creek nation. He first met McGillivray, then in his early manhood, at the town of Coweta, the great war town on the Chattahoochee, where the half-breed chief, seated on a bearskin in the council-house, surrounded by his wise men and warriors, was planning to give aid to the British. Afterward he married one of McGillivray's sisters, whom he met at a great dance—a pretty girl, clad in a short silk petticoat, her chemise of fine linen clasped with silver, her earrings and bracelets of the same metal, and with bright-colored ribbons in her hair.[1]

[1] Milfort, 23, 326. Milfort's book is very interesting, but as the man himself was evidently a hopeless liar and braggart, it can only be trusted where it was not for his interest to tell a falsehood. His book was written after McGillivray's death, the object being to claim for himself the glory belonging to the half-breed chief.

The task set to the son of Sehoy was one of incredible difficulty, for he was head of a loose array of towns and tribes from whom no man could get perfect, and none but himself even imperfect, obedience. The nation could not stop a town from going to war, nor, in turn, could a town stop its own young men from committing ravages. Thus the whites were always being provoked, and the frontiersmen were molested as often when they were quiet and peaceful as when they were encroaching on Indian land. The Creeks owed the land which they possessed to murder and rapine; they mercilessly destroyed all weaker communities, red or white; they had no idea of showing justice or generosity toward their fellows who lacked their strength, and now the measure they had meted so often to others was at last to be meted to them. If the whites treated them well, it was set down to weakness. It was utterly impossible to restrain the young men from murdering and plundering, either the neighboring Indians or the white settlements. Their one ideal of glory was to get scalps, and these the young braves were sure to seek, no matter how much the older and cooler men might try to prevent them. Whether war was declared or not made no difference. At one time the English exerted themselves successfully to bring about a peace between the Creeks and Cherokees. At its conclusion a Creek chief taunted the mediators as follows: "You have sweated yourselves poor in

He insisted that he was the war-chief, the arm, and McGillivray merely the head, and boasts of his numerous successful war enterprises. But the fact is, that during this whole time the Creeks performed no important stroke in war; the successful resistance to American encroachments was due to the diplomacy of the son of Sehoy. Moreover, Milfort's accounts of his own war deeds are mainly sheer romancing. He appears simply to have been one of a score of war-chiefs, and there were certainly a dozen other Creek chiefs, both half-breeds and natives, who were far more formidable to the frontier than he was; all their names were dreaded by the settlers, but his was hardly known.

our smoky houses to make peace between us and the Cherokees, and thereby enable our young people to give you in a short time a far worse sweat than you have yet had." [1] The result justified his predictions; the young men, having no other foe, at once took to ravaging the settlements. It soon became evident that it was hopeless to expect the Creeks to behave well to the whites merely because they were themselves well treated, and from that time on the English fomented, instead of striving to put a stop to, their quarrels with the Choctaws and Chickasaws.

The record of our dealings with them must in many places be unpleasant reading to us, for it shows grave wrong-doing on our part; yet the Creeks themselves lacked only the power, but not the will, to treat us worse than we treated them, and the darkest pages of their history recite the wrongs that we ourselves suffered at their hands.

[1] Adair, 279.

CHAPTER IV

THE ALGONQUINS OF THE NORTHWEST

1769–1774

Between the Ohio and the Great Lakes, directly north of the Appalachian confederacies, and separated from them by the unpeopled wilderness now forming the States of Tennessee and Kentucky, dwelt another set of Indian tribes. They were ruder in life and manners than their Southern kinsmen, less advanced toward civilization, but also far more warlike; they depended more on the chase and fishing, and much less on agriculture; they were savages, not merely barbarians; and they were fewer in numbers and scattered over a wider expanse of territory. But they were farther advanced than the almost purely nomadic tribes of horse Indians whom we afterward encountered west of the Mississippi. Some of their villages were permanent, at any rate for a term of years, and near them they cultivated small crops of corn and melons. Their usual dwelling was the conical wigwam covered with bark, skins, or mats of plaited reeds, but in some of the villages of the tribes nearest the border, there were regular blockhouses, copied from their white neighbors. They went clad in skins or blankets; the men were hunters and warriors, who painted their bodies, and shaved from their crowns all the hair except the long scalp-lock, while the squaws were the drudges who did all the work.

Their relations with the Iroquois, who lay east of them, were rarely very close, and, in fact, were generally hostile. They were also usually at odds with the South-

ern Indians, but among themselves they were frequently united in time of war into a sort of lax league, and were collectively designated by the Americans as the northwestern Indians. All the tribes belonged to the great Algonquin family, with two exceptions, the Winnebagos and the Wyandots. The former, a branch of the Dakotahs, dwelt west of Lake Michigan; they came but little in contact with us, although many of their young men and warriors joined their neighbors in all the wars against us. The Wyandots, or Hurons, lived near Detroit and along the south shore of Lake Erie, and were in battle our most redoubtable foes. They were close kin to the Iroquois, though bitter enemies to them, and they shared the desperate valor of these, their hostile kinsfolk, holding themselves above the surrounding Algonquins, with whom, nevertheless, they lived in peace and friendship.

The Algonquins were divided into many tribes, of ever-shifting size. It would be impossible to place them all, or indeed to enumerate them, with any degree of accuracy; for the tribes were continually splitting up, absorbing others, being absorbed in turn, or changing their abode, and, in addition, there were numerous small subtribes or bands of renegades, which sometimes were, and sometimes were not, considered as portions of their larger neighbors. Often, also, separate bands, which would vaguely regard themselves as all one nation in one generation, would in the next have lost even this sense of loose tribal unity.

The chief tribes, however, were well known, and occupied tolerably definite locations. The Delawares, or Leni-Lenappe, dwelt farthest east, lying northwest of the upper Ohio, their lands adjoining those of the Senecas, the largest and westernmost of the Six Nations.

The Iroquois had been their most relentless foes and oppressors in time gone by; but on the eve of the Revolution all the border tribes were forgetting their past differences, and were drawing together to make a stand against the common foe. Thus it came about that parties of young Seneca braves fought with the Delawares in all their wars against us.

Westward of the Delawares lay the Shawnee villages, along the Scioto and on the Pickaway plains; but it must be remembered that the Shawnees, Delawares, and Wyandots were closely united and their villages were often mixed in together. Still farther to the west, the Miamis or Twigtees lived between the Miami and the Wabash, together with other associated tribes, the Piankeshaws and the Weas or Ouatinous. Farther still, around the French villages, dwelt those scattered survivors of the Illinois who had escaped the dire fate which befell their fellow tribesmen because they murdered Pontiac. Northward of this scanty people lived the Sacs and Foxes, and around the upper Great Lakes the numerous and powerful Pottawatomies, Ottawas, and Chippewas; fierce and treacherous warriors, who did not till the soil, and were hunters and fishers only, more savage even than the tribes that lay southeast of them.[1] In the works of the early travellers, we read the names of many other Indian nations; but whether these were indeed separate peoples, or branches of some of those already mentioned, or whether the different travellers spelled the Indian names in widely different ways, we cannot say. All that is certain is that there were many tribes and subtribes, who roamed and warred and hunted over the fair lands now forming the heart

[1] See papers by Stephen D. Peet, on the northwestern tribes, read before the State Archæological Society of Ohio, 1878.

of our mighty nation, that to some of these tribes the whites gave names and to some they did not, and that the named and the nameless alike were swept down to the same inevitable doom.

Moreover, there were bands of renegades or discontented Indians, who for some cause had severed their tribal connections. Two of the most prominent of these bands were the Cherokees and Mingos, both being noted for their predatory and murderous nature, and their incessant raids on the frontier settlers. The Cherokees were fugitives from the rest of their nation, who had fled north, beyond the Ohio, and dwelt in the land shared by the Delawares and Shawnees, drawing to themselves many of the lawless young warriors, not only of these tribes, but of the others still farther off. The Mingos were likewise a mongrel banditti, made up of outlaws and wild spirits from among the Wyandots and Miamis, as well as from the Iroquois and the Munceys (a subtribe of the Delawares).

All these northwestern nations had at one time been conquered by the Iroquois, or at least they had been defeated, their lands overrun, and they themselves forced to acknowledge a vague overlordship on the part of their foes. But the power of the Iroquois was now passing away; when our national history began, with the assembling of the first Continental Congress, they had ceased to be a menace to the Western tribes, and the latter no longer feared or obeyed them, regarding them merely as allies or neutrals. Yet not only the Iroquois, but their kindred folk, notably the Wyandots, still claimed, and received, for the sake of their ancient superiority, marks of formal respect from the surrounding Algonquins. Thus, among the latter, the Leni-Lenappe possessed the titular headship, and were called "grand-

fathers" at all the solemn councils, as well as in the ceremonious communications that passed among the tribes; yet in turn they had to use similar titles of respect in addressing not only their former oppressors, but also their Huron allies, who had suffered under the same galling yoke.[1]

The northwestern nations had gradually come to equal the Iroquois as warriors; but among themselves the palm was still held by the Wyandots, who, although no more formidable than the others as regards skill, hardihood, and endurance, nevertheless stood alone in being willing to suffer heavy punishment in order to win a victory.[2]

The Wyandots had been under the influence of the French Jesuits, and were nominally Christians;[3] and though the attempt to civilize them had not been very successful, and they remained in most respects precisely like the Indians around them, there had been at least one point gained, for they were not, as a rule, nearly so cruel to their prisoners. Thus they surpassed their neighbors in mercifulness as well as valor. All the Algonquin tribes stood, in this respect, much on the same plane. The Delawares, whose fate it had been to be ever buffeted about by both the whites and the reds, had long cowered under the Iroquois terror, but they had at last shaken it off, had reasserted the superiority which tradition says they once before held, and had be-

[1] Barton, XXV.

[2] Gen. W. H. Harrison, "Aborigines of the Ohio Valley." Old "Tippecanoe" was the best possible authority for their courage.

[3] "Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Colonel James Smith, etc.," written by himself, Lexington, Ky., 1799. Smith is our best contemporary authority on Indian warfare; he lived with them for several years, and fought them in many campaigns. Besides several editions of the above, he also published, in 1812, at Paris, Ky., a "Treatise" on Indian warfare, which holds much the same matter.

come a formidable and warlike race. Indeed, it is curious to study how the Delawares have changed in respect to their martial prowess since the days when the whites first came in contact with them. They were then not accounted a formidable people, and were not feared by any of their neighbors. By the time the Revolution broke out, they had become better warriors, and during the twenty years' Indian warfare that ensued were as formidable as most of the other redskins. But when moved west of the Mississippi, instead of their spirit being broken, they became more warlike than ever, and throughout the present century they have been the most renowned fighters of all the Indian peoples, and, moreover, they have been celebrated for their roving, adventurous nature. Their numbers have steadily dwindled, owing to their incessant wars and to the dangerous nature of their long roamings.[1]

It is impossible to make any but the roughest guess at the numbers of these northwestern Indians. It seems probable that there were considerably over fifty thousand of them in all; but no definite assertion can be made even as to the different tribes. As with the Southern Indians, old-time writers certainly greatly exaggerated their numbers, and their modern followers show a tendency to fall into the opposite fault, the truth being that any number of isolated observations to support either position can be culled from the works of the con-

[1] See Parkman's "Oregon Trail." In 1884 I myself met two Delawares hunting alone, just north of the Black Hills. They were returning from a trip to the Rocky Mountains. I could not but admire their strong, manly forms, and the disdainful resolution with which they had hunted and travelled for so many hundred miles, in defiance of the white frontiersmen and of the wild native tribes as well. I think they were in more danger from the latter than the former; but they seemed perfectly confident of their ability to hold their own against both.

temporary travellers and statisticians.[1] No two independent observers give the same figures. One main reason for this is doubtless the exceedingly loose way in which the word "tribe" was used. If a man speaks of the Miamis and the Delawares, for instance, before we can understand him we must know whether he includes therein the Weas and the Munceys, for he may or may not. By quoting the numbers attributed by the old writers to the various subtribes, and then comparing them with the numbers given later on by writers using the same names, but speaking of entire confederacies, it is easy to work out an apparent increase, while a reversal of the process shows an appalling decrease. Moreover, as the bands broke up, wandered apart, and then rejoined each other or not, as events fell out, two successive observers might make widely different estimates. Many tribes that have disappeared were undoubtedly actually destroyed; many more have simply changed their names, or have been absorbed by other tribes. Similarly, those that have apparently held their own have done so at the expense of their neighbors. This was made all the easier by the fact that the Algonquins were so closely related in customs and language; indeed, there was constant intermarriage between the different tribes. On the whole, however, there is no question that, in striking contrast to the southern or Appalachian Indians, these northwestern tribes have suffered a terrible diminution in numbers.

With many of them we did not come into direct contact for long years after our birth as a nation. Perhaps those tribes with all or part of whose warriors we were brought into collision at some time during or immediately succeeding the Revolutionary War may have

[1] See Barton, the Madison MSS., Schoolcraft, Thos. Hutchins (who accompanied Bouquet), Smythe, Pike, various reports of the U. S. Indian Commissioners, etc.

amounted to thirty thousand souls.[1] But though they acknowledged kinship with one another, and though they all alike hated the Americans; and though, moreover, all at times met in the great councils, to smoke the calumet of peace, and brighten the chain of friendship[2] among themselves, and to take up the tomahawk[3] against the white foes, yet the tie that bound them together was so loose, and they were so fickle and so split up by jarring interests and small jealousies, that never more than half of them went to war at the same time. Very frequently even the members of a tribe would fail to act together.

Thus it came about that during the forty years intervening between Braddock's defeat and Wayne's victory, though these northwestern tribes waged incessant, unending, relentless warfare against our borders, yet they never at any one time had more than three thousand warriors in the field, and frequently not half that number;[4] and in all the battles they fought with British and American troops, there was not one in which they were eleven hundred strong.[5]

[1] I base this number on a careful examination of the tribes named above, discarding such of the Northern bands of the Chippewas, for instance, as were unlikely at that time to have been drawn into war with us.

[2] The expressions generally used by them in sending their war talks and peace talks to one another or the whites. Hundreds of copies of these "talks" are preserved at Washington.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Smith, "Remarkable Occurrences," etc., p. 154. Smith gives a very impartial account of the Indian discipline and of their effectiveness, and is one of the few men who warred against them who did not greatly overestimate their numbers and losses. He was a successful Indian fighter himself. For the British regulars he had a true backwoods contempt, although having more than the average backwoods sense in acknowledging their effectiveness in the open. He had lived so long among the Indians, and estimated so highly their personal prowess, that his opinion must be accepted with caution where dealing with matters of discipline and command.

[5] The accounts of the Indian numbers in any battle given by British or Americans, soldiers or civilians, are ludicrously exaggerated as a rule; even now it seems a common belief of historians that the whites were generally outnumbered in battles, while in reality they were generally much more numerous than their foes.

But they were superb individual fighters, beautifully drilled in their own discipline;[1] and they were favored beyond measure by the nature of their ground, of which their whole system of warfare enabled them to take the utmost possible benefit. Much has been written and sung of the advantages possessed by the mountaineer when striving in his own home against invaders from the plains; but these advantages are as nothing when weighed with those which make the warlike dweller in forests unconquerable by men who have not his training. A hardy soldier, accustomed only to war in the open, will become a good cragsman in fewer weeks than it will take him years to learn to be so much as a fair woodsman; for it is beyond all comparison more difficult to attain proficiency in woodcraft than in mountaineering.[2]

The Wyandots, and the Algonquins who surrounded them, dwelt in a region of sunless, tangled forests; and all the wars we waged for the possession of the country between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi were carried on in the never-ending stretches of gloomy woodland. It was not an open forest. The underbrush grew, dense and rank, between the boles of the tall trees, making a cover so thick that it was in many places impenetrable, so thick that it nowhere gave a chance for human eye to see even as far as a bow could carry. No

[1] Harrison (*loc. cit.*) calls them "the finest light troops in the world"; and he had had full experience in serving with American and against British Infantry.

[2] Any one who is fond of the chase can test the truth of this proposition for himself, by trying how long it will take him to learn to kill a bighorn on the mountains, and how long it will take him to learn to kill whitetail deer in a dense forest, by fair still-hunting, the game being equally plenty. I have known many novices learn to equal the best old hunters, red or white, in killing mountain game; I have never met one who could begin to do as well as an Indian in the dense forest, unless brought up to it—and rarely even then. Yet, though woodcraft is harder to learn, it does not imply the possession of such valuable qualities as mountaineering; and when cragsman and woodman meet on neutral ground, the former is apt to be the better man.

horse could penetrate it save by following the game trails or paths chopped with the axe; and a stranger venturing a hundred yards from a beaten road would be so helplessly lost that he could not, except by the merest chance, even find his way back to the spot he had just left. Here and there it was broken by a rare hillside glade or by a meadow in a stream valley; but elsewhere a man might travel for weeks as if in a perpetual twilight, never once able to see the sun through the interlacing twigs that formed a dark canopy above his head.

This dense forest was to the Indians a home in which they had lived from childhood, and where they were as much at ease as a farmer on his own acres. To their keen eyes, trained for generations to more than a wild beast's watchfulness, the wilderness was an open book; nothing at rest or in motion escaped them. They had begun to track game as soon as they could walk; a scrape on a tree trunk, a bruised leaf, a faint indentation of the soil, which the eye of no white man could see, all told them a tale as plainly as if it had been shouted in their ears.[1] With moccasined feet they trod among brittle twigs, dried leaves, and dead branches as silently as the cougar, and they equalled the great wood-cat in stealth and far surpassed it in cunning and ferocity. They could no more get lost in the trackless wilderness than a civilized man could get lost on a highway. Moreover, no knight of the Middle Ages was so surely protected by his armor as they were by their skill in hid-

[1] To this day the wild—not the half-tame—Indians remain unequalled as trackers. Even among the old hunters not one white in a hundred can come near them. In my experience I have known a very few whites who had spent all their lives in the wilderness who equalled the Indian average; but I never met any white who came up to the very best Indian. But, because of their better shooting and their better nerve, the whites often make the better hunters.

ing; the whole forest was to the whites one vast ambush, and to them a sure and ever-present shield. Every tree trunk was a breastwork ready prepared for battle; every bush, every moss-covered boulder, was a defense against assault, from behind which, themselves unseen, they watched with fierce derision the movements of their clumsy white enemy. Lurking, skulking, travelling with noiseless rapidity, they left a trail that only a master in woodcraft could follow, while, on the other hand, they could dog a white man's footsteps as a hound runs a fox. Their silence, their cunning and stealth, their terrible prowess and merciless cruelty, make it no figure of speech to call them the tigers of the human race.

Unlike the Southern Indians, the villages of the northwestern tribes were usually far from the frontier. Tireless, and careless of all hardship, they came silently out of unknown forests, robbed and murdered, and then disappeared again into the fathomless depths of the woods. Half of the terror they caused was due to the extreme difficulty of following them, and the absolute impossibility of forecasting their attacks. Without warning, and unseen until the moment they dealt the death-stroke, they emerged from the forest fastnesses, the horror they caused being heightened no less by the mystery that shrouded them than by the dreadful nature of their ravages. Wrapped in the mantle of the unknown, appalling by their craft, their ferocity, their fiendish cruelty, they seemed to the white settlers devils and not men; no one could say with certainty whence they came nor of what tribe they were; and when they had finished their dreadful work they retired into a wilderness that closed over their trail as the waves of the ocean close in the wake of a ship.

They were trained to the use of arms from their youth

up, and war and hunting were their two chief occupations, the business as well as the pleasure of their lives. They were not as skilful as the white hunters with the rifle[1]—though more so than the average regular soldier—nor could they equal the frontiersman in feats of physical prowess, such as boxing and wrestling; but their superior endurance and the ease with which they stood fatigue and exposure made amends for this. A white might outrun them for eight or ten miles; but on a long journey they could tire out any man, and any beast except a wolf. Like most barbarians, they were fickle and inconstant, not to be relied on for pushing through a long campaign, and after a great victory apt to go off to their homes, because each man desired to secure his own plunder and tell his own tale of glory. They are often spoken of as undisciplined; but in reality their discipline in the battle itself was very high. They attacked, retreated, rallied, or repelled a charge at the signal of command; and they were able to fight in open order in thick covers without losing touch of each other—a feat that no European regiment was then able to perform.

On their own ground they were far more formidable than the best European troops. The British Grenadiers throughout the eighteenth century showed themselves superior, in the actual shock of battle, to any infantry of Continental Europe; if they ever met an overmatch, it was when pitted against the Scotch Highlanders. Yet both grenadier and highlander, the heroes of Minden, the heirs to the glory of Marlborough's campaigns, as

[1] It is curious how to this day the wild Indians retain the same traits. I have seen and taken part in many matches between frontiersmen and the Sioux, Cheyennes, Grosventres, and Mandans, and the Indians were beaten in almost every one. On the other hand, the Indians will stand fatigue, hunger, and privation better, but they seem more susceptible to cold.

well as the sinewy soldiers who shared in the charges of Prestonpans and Culloden, proved helpless when led against the dark tribesmen of the forest. On the march they could not be trusted thirty yards from the column without getting lost in the woods[1]—the mountain training of the highlanders apparently standing them in no stead whatever—and were only able to get around at all when convoyed by backwoodsmen. In fight, they fared even worse. The British regulars at Braddock's battle, and the highlanders at Grant's defeat a few years later, suffered the same fate. Both battles were fair fights; neither was a surprise; yet the stubborn valor of the red-coated grenadier and the headlong courage of the kilted Scot proved of less than no avail. Not only were they utterly routed and destroyed in each case by an inferior force of Indians (the French taking little part in the conflict), but they were able to make no effective resistance whatever; it is to this day doubtful whether these superb regulars were able, in the battles where they were destroyed, to so much as kill one Indian for every hundred of their own men who fell. The provincials who were with the regulars were the only troops who caused any loss to the foe; and this was true in but a less degree of Bouquet's fight at Bushy Run. Here Bouquet, by a clever stratagem, gained the victory over an enemy inferior in numbers to himself; but only after a two days' struggle, in which he suffered a fourfold greater loss than he inflicted.[2]

When hemmed in so that they had no hope of escape, the Indians fought to the death; but when a way of re-

[1] See Parkman's "Conspiracy of Pontiac"; also "Montcalm and Wolfe."

[2] Bouquet, like so many of his predecessors, and successors, greatly exaggerated the numbers and loss of the Indians in this fight. Smith, who derived his information both from the Indians and from the American rangers, states that but eighteen Indians were killed at Bushy Run.

treat was open they would not stand cutting like British, French, or American regulars, and so, though with a nearly equal force, would retire if they were suffering heavily, even if they were causing their foes to suffer still more. This was not due to lack of courage; it was their system, for they were few in numbers, and they did not believe in losing their men.[1] The Wyandots were exceptions to this rule, for with them it was a point of honor not to yield, and so they were of all the tribes the most dangerous in an actual pitched battle.[2]

But making the attack, as they usually did, with the expectation of success, all were equally dangerous. If their foes were clustered together in a huddle they attacked them without hesitation, no matter what the difference in numbers, and shot them down as if they had been elk or buffalo, they themselves being almost absolutely safe from harm, as they flitted from cover to cover. It was this capacity for hiding, or taking advantage of cover, that gave them their great superiority; and it is because of this that the wood tribes were so much more formidable foes in actual battle than the horse Indians of the plains afterward proved themselves. In dense woodland a body of regular soldiers are almost as useless against Indians as they would be if at night they had to fight foes who could see in the dark; it needs special and long-continued training to fit them in any degree for wood-fighting against such foes. Out on the

[1] Most of the plains Indians feel in the same way at present. I was once hunting with a Sioux half-breed who illustrated the Indian view of the matter in a rather striking way, saying: "If there were a dozen of you white hunters and you found six or eight bears in the brush, and you knew you could go in and kill them all, but that in the fight you would certainly lose three or four men yourselves, you wouldn't go in, would you? You'd wait until you got a better chance, and could kill them without so much risk. Well, Indians feel the same way about attacking whites that you would feel about attacking those bears."

[2] All the authorities, from Smith to Harrison, are unanimous on this point.

plains the white hunter's skill with the rifle and his cool resolution give him an immense advantage; a few determined men can withstand a host of Indians in the open, although helpless if they meet them in thick cover; and our defeats by the Sioux and other plains tribes have generally taken the form of a small force being overwhelmed by a large one.

Not only were the Indians very terrible in battle, but they were cruel beyond all belief in victory; and the gloomy annals of border warfare are stained with their darkest hues because it was a war in which helpless women and children suffered the same hideous fate that so often befell their husbands and fathers. It was a war waged by savages against armed settlers, whose families followed them into the wilderness. Such a war is inevitably bloody and cruel; but the inhuman love of cruelty for cruelty's sake,[1] which marks the red Indian above all other savages, rendered these wars more terrible than any others. For the hideous, unnamable, unthinkable tortures practised by the red men on their captured foes, and on their foes' tender women and helpless children, were such as we read of in no other struggle, hardly even in the revolting pages that tell the deeds of the Holy Inquisition. It was inevitable—indeed it was in many instances proper—that such deeds should awake in the breasts of the whites the grimmest, wildest spirit of revenge and hatred.

The history of the border wars, both in the ways they

[1] Any one who has ever been in an encampment of wild Indians, and has had the misfortune to witness the delight the children take in torturing little animals, will admit that the Indian's love of cruelty for cruelty's sake cannot possibly be exaggerated. The young are so trained that when old they shall find their keenest pleasure in inflicting pain in its most appalling form. Among the most brutal white borderers a man would be instantly lynched if he practised on any creature the fiendish torture which in an Indian camp either attracts no notice at all, or else excites merely laughter.

were begun and in the ways they were waged, makes a long tale of injuries inflicted, suffered, and mercilessly revenged. It could not be otherwise when brutal, reckless, lawless borderers, despising all men not of their own color, were thrown in contact with savages who esteemed cruelty and treachery as the highest of virtues, and rapine and murder as the worthiest of pursuits. Moreover, it was sadly inevitable that the law-abiding borderer as well as the white ruffian, the peaceful Indian as well as the painted marauder, should be plunged into the struggle to suffer the punishment that should only have fallen on their evil-minded fellows.

Looking back, it is easy to say that much of the wrong-doing could have been prevented; but if we examine the facts to find out the truth, not to establish a theory, we are bound to admit that the struggle was really one that could not possibly have been avoided. The sentimental historians speak as if the blame had been all ours, and the wrong all done to our foes, and as if it would have been possible by any exercise of wisdom to reconcile claims that were in their very essence conflicting; but their utterances are as shallow as they are untruthful.[1] Unless we were willing that the whole continent west of the Alleghanies should remain an unpeopled waste, the hunting-ground of savages, war was inevitable; and even had we been willing, and had we refrained from encroaching on the Indians' lands, the war would have come nevertheless, for then the Indians themselves would have encroached on ours. Undoubtedly we have wronged many tribes; but equally undoubtedly our first definite knowledge of many others has been derived from their unprovoked outrages upon our people. The Chippewas, Ottawas, and Potta-

[1] See Note p. 90.

watomies furnished hundreds of young warriors to the parties that devastated our frontiers generations before we in any way encroached upon or wronged them.

Mere outrages could be atoned for or settled; the question which lay at the root of our difficulties was that of the occupation of the land itself, and to this there could be no solution save war. The Indians had no ownership of the land in the way in which we understand the term. The tribes lived far apart; each had for its hunting-grounds all the territory from which it was not barred by rivals. Each looked with jealousy upon all interlopers, but each was prompt to act as an interloper when occasion offered. Every good hunting-ground was claimed by many nations. It was rare, indeed, that any tribe had an uncontested title to a large tract of land; where such title existed, it rested not on actual occupancy and cultivation, but on the recent butchery of weaker rivals. For instance, there were a dozen tribes, all of whom hunted in Kentucky, and fought each other there, all of whom had equally good titles to the soil, and not one of whom acknowledged the right of any other; as a matter of fact, they had therein no right, save the right of the strongest. The land no more belonged to them than it belonged to Boone and the white hunters who first visited it.

On the borders there are perpetual complaints of the encroachments of whites upon Indian lands; and naturally the central government at Washington, and before it was at Washington, has usually been inclined to sympathize with the feeling that considers the whites the aggressors, for the government does not wish a war, does not itself feel any land hunger, hears of not a tenth of the Indian outrages, and knows by experience that the white borderers are not easy to rule. As a conse-

quence, the official reports of the people who are not on the ground are apt to paint the Indian side in its most favorable light, and are often completely untrustworthy, this being particularly the case if the author of the report is an Eastern man, utterly unacquainted with the actual condition of affairs on the frontier.

Such a man, though both honest and intelligent, when he hears that the whites have settled on Indian lands, cannot realize that the act has no resemblance whatever to the forcible occupation of land already cultivated. The white settler has merely moved into an uninhabited waste; he does not feel that he is committing a wrong, for he knows perfectly well that the land is really owned by no one. It is never even visited, except perhaps for a week or two every year, and then the visitors are likely at any moment to be driven off by a rival hunting-party of greater strength. The settler ousts no one from the land; if he did not chop down the trees, hew out the logs for a building, and clear the ground for tillage, no one else would do so. He drives out the game, however, and of course the Indians who live thereon sink their mutual animosities and turn against the intruder. The truth is, the Indians never had any real title to the soil; they had not half as good a claim to it, for instance, as the cattlemen now have to all eastern Montana, yet no one would assert that the cattlemen have a right to keep immigrants off their vast unfenced ranges. The settler and pioneer have at bottom had justice on their side; this great continent could not have been kept as nothing but a game-preserve for squalid savages. Moreover, to the most oppressed Indian nations the whites often acted as a protection, or, at least, they deferred instead of hastening their fate. But for the interposition of the whites it is probable that the Iroquois would have exter-

minated every Algonquin tribe before the end of the eighteenth century; exactly as in recent time the Crows and Pawnees would have been destroyed by the Sioux, had it not been for the wars we have waged against the latter.

Again, the loose governmental system of the Indians made it as difficult to secure a permanent peace with them as it was to negotiate the purchase of the lands. The sachem, or hereditary peace chief, and the elective war-chief, who wielded only the influence that he could secure by his personal prowess and his tact, were equally unable to control all of their tribesmen, and were powerless with their confederated nations. If peace was made with the Shawnees, the war was continued by the Miamis; if peace was made with the latter, nevertheless perhaps one small band was dissatisfied, and continued the contest on its own account; and even if all the recognized bands were dealt with, the parties of renegades or outlaws had to be considered; and in the last resort the full recognition accorded by the Indians to the right of private warfare made it possible for any individual warrior who possessed any influence to go on raiding and murdering unchecked. Every tribe, every subtribe, every band of a dozen souls ruled over by a petty chief, almost every individual warrior of the least importance, had to be met and pacified. Even if peace were declared, the Indians could not exist long without breaking it. There was to them no temptation to trespass on the white man's ground for the purpose of settling; but every young brave was brought up to regard scalps taken and horses stolen, in war or peace, as the highest proofs and tokens of skill and courage, the sure means of attaining glory and honor, the admiration of men and the love of women. Where the young men

thought thus, and the chiefs had so little real control, it was inevitable that there should be many unprovoked forays for scalps, slaves, and horses made upon the white borderers.[1]

As for the whites themselves, they too have many and grievous sins against their red neighbors for which to answer. They cannot be severely blamed for trespassing upon what was called the Indian's land; for, let sentimentalists say what they will, the man who puts the soil to use must of right dispossess the man who does not, or the world will come to a standstill; but for many of their other deeds there can be no pardon. On the border each man was a law unto himself, and good and bad alike were left in perfect freedom to follow out to the uttermost limits their own desires; for the spirit of individualism so characteristic of American life reached its extreme of development in the backwoods. The whites who wished peace, the magistrates and leaders, had little more power over their evil and unruly fellows than the Indian sachems had over the turbulent young braves. Each man did what seemed best in his own eyes, almost without let or hindrance; unless, indeed, he trespassed upon the rights of his neighbors, who were ready enough to band together in their own defense, though slow to interfere in the affairs of others.

Thus the men of lawless, brutal spirit who are found in every community, and who flock to places where the reign of order is lax, were able to follow the bent of their inclinations unchecked. They utterly despised the red man; they held it no crime whatever to cheat him in trading, to rob him of his peltries or horses, to murder

[1] Similarly, the Crows, who have always been treated well by us, have murdered and robbed any number of peaceful, unprotected travellers during the past three decades, as I know personally.

him if the fit seized them. Criminals who generally preyed on their own neighbors found it easier, and perhaps hardly as dangerous, to pursue their calling at the expense of the redskins, for the latter, when they discovered that they had been wronged, were quite as apt to vent their wrath on some outsider as on the original offender. If they injured a white, all the whites might make common cause against them; but if they injured a red man, though there were sure to be plenty of whites who disapproved of it, there were apt to be very few indeed whose disapproval took any active shape.

Each race stood by its own members, and each held all of the other race responsible for the misdeeds of a few uncontrollable spirits; and this clannishness among those of one color, and the refusal or the inability to discriminate between the good and the bad of the other color, were the two most fruitful causes of border strife.[1] When, even if he sought to prevent them, the innocent man was sure to suffer for the misdeeds of the guilty, unless both joined together for defense, the former had no alternative save to make common cause with the latter. Moreover, in a sparse backwoods settlement, where the presence of a strong, vigorous fighter was a source of safety to the whole community, it was impossible to expect that he would be punished with severity for offenses which, in their hearts, his fellow townsmen could not help regarding as in some sort a revenge for

[1] It is precisely the same at the present day. I have known a party of Sioux to steal the horses of a buffalo-hunting outfit, whereupon the latter retaliated by stealing the horses of a party of harmless Grosventres: and I knew a party of Cheyennes, whose horses had been taken by white thieves, to, in revenge, assail a camp of perfectly orderly cowboys. Most of the ranchmen along the Little Missouri in 1884 were pretty good fellows, who would not wrong Indians, yet they tolerated for a long time the presence of men who did not scruple to boast that they stole horses from the latter; while our peaceful neighbors, the Grosventres, likewise permitted two notorious red-skinned horse thieves to use their reservation as a harbor of refuge, and a starting-point from which to make forays against the cattlemen.

the injuries they had themselves suffered. Every quiet, peaceable settler had either himself been grievously wronged, or had been an eye-witness to wrongs done to his friends; and while these were vivid in his mind, the corresponding wrongs done the Indians were never brought home to him at all. If his son was scalped or his cattle driven off, he could not be expected to remember that perhaps the Indians who did the deed had themselves been cheated by a white trader, or had lost a relative at the hands of some border ruffian, or felt aggrieved because a hundred miles off some settler had built a cabin on lands they considered their own. When he joined with other exasperated and injured men to make a retaliatory inroad, his vengeance might or might not fall on the heads of the real offenders; and, in any case, he was often not in the frame of mind to put a stop to the outrages sure to be committed by the brutal spirits among his allies—though these brutal spirits were probably in a small minority.

The excesses so often committed by the whites, when, after many checks and failures, they at last grasped victory, are causes for shame and regret; yet it is only fair to keep in mind the terrible provocations they had endured. Mercy, pity, magnanimity to the fallen, could not be expected from the frontiersmen gathered together to war against an Indian tribe. Almost every man of such a band had bitter personal wrongs to avenge. He was not taking part in a war against a civilized foe; he was fighting in a contest where women and children suffered the fate of the strong men, and instead of enthusiasm for his country's flag and a general national animosity toward its enemies, he was actuated by a furious flame of hot anger, and was goaded on by memories of which merely to think was madness. His friends had

been treacherously slain while on messages of peace; his house had been burned, his cattle driven off, and all he had in the world destroyed before he knew that war existed and when he felt quite guiltless of all offense; his sweetheart or wife had been carried off, ravished, and was at the moment the slave and concubine of some dirty and brutal Indian warrior; his son, the stay of his house, had been burned at the stake with torments too horrible to mention;[1] his sister, when ransomed and returned to him, had told of the weary journey through the woods, when she carried around her neck as a horrible necklace the bloody scalps of her husband and children;[2] seared into his eyeballs, into his very brain, he bore ever with him, waking or sleeping, the sight of the skinned, mutilated, hideous body of the baby who had just grown old enough to recognize him and to crow and laugh when taken in his arms. Such incidents as these were not exceptional; one or more, and often all of them, were the invariable attendants of every one of the countless Indian inroads that took place during the long generations of forest warfare. It was small wonder that men who had thus lost everything should sometimes be fairly crazed by their wrongs. Again and again on the frontier we hear of some such unfortunate who has devoted all the remainder of his wretched life to the one object of taking vengeance on the whole race of the men who had

[1] The expression "too horrible to mention" is to be taken literally, not figuratively. It applies equally to the fate that has befallen every white man or woman who has fallen into the power of hostile plains Indians during the last ten or fifteen years. The nature of the wild Indian has not changed. Not one man in a hundred, and not a single woman, escapes torments which a civilized man cannot look another in the face and so much as speak of. Impalement on charred sticks, finger-nails split off backward, finger-joints chewed off, eyes burnt out — these tortures can be mentioned, but there are others equally normal and customary which cannot even be hinted at, especially when women are the victims.

[2] For the particular incident, see M'Ferrin's "History of Methodism in Tennessee," p. 145.

darkened his days forever. Too often the squaws and pappooses fell victims of the vengeance that should have come only on the warriors; for the whites regarded their foes as beasts rather than men, and knew that the squaws were more cruel than others in torturing the prisoner, and that the very children took their full part therein, being held up by their fathers to tomahawk the dying victims at the stake.[1]

Thus it is that there are so many dark and bloody pages in the book of border warfare, that grim and iron-bound volume, wherein we read how our forefathers won the wide lands that we inherit. It contains many a tale of fierce heroism and adventurous ambition, of the daring and resolute courage of men and the patient endurance of women; it shows us a stern race of freemen who toiled hard, endured greatly, and fronted adversity bravely, who prized strength and courage and good faith, whose wives were chaste, who were generous and loyal to their friends. But it shows us also how they spurned at restraint, and fretted under it, how they would brook no wrong to themselves, and yet too often inflicted wrongs on others; their feats of terrible prowess are interspersed with deeds of the foulest and most wanton aggression, the darkest treachery, the most revolting cruelty; and though we meet with plenty of the rough, strong, coarse virtues, we see but little of such qualities as mercy for the fallen, the weak, and the helpless, or pity for a gallant and vanquished foe.

[1] As was done to the father of Simon Girty. Any history of any Indian inroad will give examples such as I have mentioned above. See McAfee MSS., John P. Hale's "Trans-Alleghany Pioneers," De Haas's "Indian Wars," Wither's "Border War," etc. In one respect, however, the Indians east of the Mississippi were better than the tribes of the plains from whom our borders have suffered during the present century; their female captives were not invariably ravished by every member of the band capturing them, as has ever been the custom among the horse Indians. Still, they were often made the concubines of their captors.

Among the Indians of the Northwest, generally so much alike that we need pay little heed to tribal distinctions, there was one body deserving especial and separate mention. Among the turbulent and jarring elements tossed into wild confusion by the shock of the contact between savages and the rude vanguard of civilization, surrounded and threatened by the painted warriors of the woods no less than by the lawless white riflemen who lived on the stump-dotted clearings, there dwelt a group of peaceful beings who were destined to suffer a dire fate in the most lamentable and pitiable of all the tragedies which were played out in the heart of this great wilderness. These were the Moravian Indians.[1] They were mostly Delawares, and had been converted by the indefatigable German missionaries, who taught the tranquil, Quaker-like creed of Count Zinzendorf. The zeal and success of the missionaries were attested by the marvellous change they had wrought in these converts; for they had transformed them in one generation from a restless, idle, bloodthirsty people of hunters and fishers, into an orderly, thrifty, industrious folk, believing with all their hearts the Christian religion in the form in which their teachers both preached and practised it. At first the missionaries, surrounded by their Indian converts, dwelt in Pennsylvania; but, harried and oppressed by their white neighbors, the submissive and patient Moravians left their homes and their cherished belongings, and in 1771 moved out into the wilderness northwest of the Ohio. It is a bitter and unanswerable commentary on the workings of a non-resistant creed, when reduced to

[1] The missionaries called themselves United Brethren; to outsiders they were known as Moravians. Loskiel, "History of the Mission of the United Brethren," London, 1794. Heckewelder, "Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren," Philadelphia, 1820.

practice, that such outrages and massacres as those committed on these helpless Indians were more numerous and flagrant in the colony the Quakers governed than in any other; their vaunted policy of peace, which forbade them to play a true man's part and put down wrong-doing, caused the utmost possible evil to fall both on the white man and the red. An avowed policy of force and fraud, carried out in the most cynical manner, could hardly have worked more terrible injustice; their system was a direct incentive to crime and wrong-doing between the races, for they punished the aggressions of neither, and hence allowed any blow to always fall heaviest on those least deserving to suffer. No other colony made such futile, contemptible efforts to deal with the Indian problem; no other colony showed such supine, selfish helplessness in allowing her own border citizens to be mercilessly harried; none other betrayed such inability to master the hostile Indians, while, nevertheless, utterly failing to protect those who were peaceful and friendly.

When the Moravians removed beyond the Ohio, they settled on the banks of the Muskingum, made clearings in the forest, and built themselves little towns, which they christened by such quaint names as Salem and Gnadenhütten; names that were pathetic symbols of the peace which the harmless and sadly submissive wanderers so vainly sought. Here, in the forest, they worked and toiled, surrounded their clean, neatly kept villages with orchards and grain-fields, bred horses and cattle, and tried to do wrong to no man; all of each community meeting every day to worship and praise their Creator. But the missionaries who had done so much for them had also done one thing which more than offset it all; for they had taught them not to defend them-

selves, and had thus exposed the poor beings who trusted their teaching to certain destruction. No greater wrong can ever be done than to put a good man at the mercy of a bad, while telling him not to defend himself or his fellows; in no way can the success of evil be made surer and quicker; but the wrong was peculiarly great when, at such a time and in such a place, the defenseless Indians were thrust between the anvil of their savage red brethren and the hammer of the lawless and brutal white borderer. The awful harvest which the poor converts reaped had in reality been sown for them by their own friends and would-be benefactors.

So the Moravians, seeking to deal honestly with Indians and whites alike, but in return suspected and despised by both, worked patiently year in and year out, as they dwelt in their lonely homes, meekly awaiting the stroke of the terrible doom which hung over them.

NOTE

It is greatly to be wished that some competent person would write a full and true history of our national dealings with the Indians. Undoubtedly the latter have often suffered terrible injustice at our hands. A number of instances, such as the conduct of the Georgians to the Cherokees in the early part of the present century, or the whole treatment of Chief Joseph and his Nez Percés, might be mentioned, which are indelible blots on our fair fame; and yet, in describing our dealings with the red men as a whole, historians do us much less than justice.

It was wholly impossible to avoid conflicts with the weaker race, unless we were willing to see the American continent fall into the hands of some other strong power; and even had we adopted such a ludicrous policy, the Indians themselves would have made war upon us. It cannot be too often insisted that they did not own the land; or, at least, that their

ownership was merely such as that claimed often by our own white hunters. If the Indians really owned Kentucky in 1775, then in 1776 it was the property of Boone and his associates; and to dispossess one party was as great a wrong as to dispossess the other. To recognize the Indian ownership of the limitless prairies and forests of this continent—that is, to consider the dozen squalid savages who hunted at long intervals over a territory of a thousand square miles as owning it outright—necessarily implies a similar recognition of the claims of every white hunter, squatter, horse thief, or wandering cattleman. Take as an example the country round the Little Missouri. When the cattlemen, the first actual settlers, came into this land in 1882, it was already scantily peopled by a few white hunters and trappers. The latter were extremely jealous of intrusion; they had held their own in spite of the Indians, and, like the Indians, the inrush of settlers and the consequent destruction of the game meant their own undoing; also, again like the Indians, they felt that their having hunted over the soil gave them a vague prescriptive right to its sole occupation, and they did their best to keep actual settlers out. In some cases, to avoid difficulty, their nominal claims were bought up; generally, and rightly, they were disregarded. Yet they certainly had as good a right to the Little Missouri country as the Sioux have to most of the land on their present reservations. In fact, the mere statement of the case is sufficient to show the absurdity of asserting that the land really belonged to the Indians. The different tribes have always been utterly unable to define their own boundaries. Thus the Delawares and Wyandots, in 1785, though entirely separate nations, claimed and, in a certain sense, occupied almost exactly the same territory.

Moreover, it was wholly impossible for our policy to be always consistent. Nowadays we undoubtedly ought to break up the great Indian reservations, disregard the tribal governments, allot the land in severalty (with, however, only a limited power of alienation), and treat the Indians as we do other citizens, with certain exceptions, for their sakes as well as ours. But this policy, which it would be wise to follow now, would have been wholly impracticable a cen-

tury since. Our central government was then too weak either effectively to control its own members or adequately to punish aggressions made upon them; and even if it had been strong, it would probably have proved impossible to keep entire order over such a vast, sparsely peopled frontier, with such turbulent elements on both sides. The Indians could not be treated as individuals at that time. There was no possible alternative, therefore, to treating their tribes as nations, exactly as the French and English had done before us. Our difficulties were partly inherited from these, our predecessors, were partly caused by our own misdeeds, but were mainly the inevitable result of the conditions under which the problem had to be solved; no human wisdom or virtue could have worked out a peaceable solution. As a nation, our Indian policy is to be blamed, because of the weakness it displayed, because of its short-sightedness, and its occasional leaning to the policy of the sentimental humanitarians; and we have often promised what was impossible to perform; but there has been little wilful wrong-doing. Our government almost always tried to act fairly by the tribes; the governmental agents (some of whom have been dishonest, and others foolish, but who, as a class, have been greatly traduced), in their reports, are far more apt to be unjust to the whites than to the reds; and the federal authorities, though unable to prevent much of the injustice, still did check and control the white borderers very much more effectually than the Indian sachems and war-chiefs controlled their young braves. The tribes were warlike and bloodthirsty, jealous of each other and of the whites; they claimed the land for their hunting-grounds, but their claims all conflicted with one another; their knowledge of their own boundaries was so indefinite that they were always willing, for inadequate compensation, to sell land to which they had merely the vaguest title; and yet, when once they had received the goods, were generally reluctant to make over even what they could; they coveted the goods and scalps of the whites, and the young warriors were always on the alert to commit outrages when they could do it with impunity. On the other hand, the evil-disposed whites regarded the Indians as fair game for robbery and violence of any kind; and the

far larger number of well-disposed men, who would not willingly wrong any Indian, were themselves maddened by the memories of hideous injuries received. They bitterly resented the action of the government, which, in their eyes, failed to properly protect them and yet sought to keep them out of waste, uncultivated lands which they did not regard as being any more the property of the Indians than of their own hunters. With the best intentions, it was wholly impossible for any government to evolve order out of such a chaos without resort to the ultimate arbitrator—the sword.

The purely sentimental historians take no account of the difficulties under which we labored nor of the countless wrongs and provocations we endured, while grossly magnifying the already lamentably large number of injuries for which we really deserve to be held responsible. To get a fair idea of the Indians of the present day, and of our dealings with them, we have fortunately one or two excellent books, notably "Hunting Grounds of the Great West" and "Our Wild Indians," by Colonel Richard I. Dodge (Hartford, 1882); and "Massacres of the Mountains," by J. P. Dunn (New York, 1886). As types of the opposite class, which are worse than valueless, and which nevertheless might cause some hasty future historian, unacquainted with the facts, to fall into grievous error, I may mention "A Century of Dishonor," by H. H. (Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson), and "Our Indian Wards" (George W. Manypenny). The latter is a mere spiteful diatribe against various army officers, and neither its manner nor its matter warrants more than an allusion. Mrs. Jackson's book is capable of doing more harm because it is written in good English, and because the author, who had lived a pure and noble life, was intensely in earnest in what she wrote, and had the most praiseworthy purpose—to prevent our committing any more injustice to the Indians. This was all most proper; every good man or woman should do whatever is possible to make the government treat the Indians of the present time in the fairest and most generous spirit, and to provide against any repetition of such outrages as were inflicted upon the Nez Percés and upon part of the Cheyennes, or the wrongs with which the civilized nations of the Indian Territory are sometimes threatened.

The purpose of the book is excellent, but the spirit in which it is written cannot be called even technically honest. As a polemic, it is possible that it did not do harm (though the effect of even a polemic is marred by hysterical indifference to facts). As a history it would be beneath criticism, were it not that the high character of the author and her excellent literary work in other directions have given it a fictitious value and made it much quoted by the large class of amiable but maudlin fanatics concerning whom it may be said that the excellence of their intentions but indifferently atones for the invariable folly and ill effect of their actions. It is not too much to say that the book is thoroughly untrustworthy from cover to cover, and that not a single statement it contains should be accepted without independent proof; for even those that are not absolutely false are often as bad on account of so much of the truth having been suppressed. One effect of this is, of course, that the author's recitals of the many real wrongs of Indian tribes utterly fail to impress us, because she lays quite as much stress on those that are nonexistent, and on the equally numerous cases where the wrongdoing was wholly the other way. To get an idea of the value of the work, it is only necessary to compare her statements about almost any tribe with the real facts, choosing at random; for instance, compare her accounts of the Sioux and the plains tribes generally with those given by Colonel Dodge in his two books; or her recital of the Sandy Creek massacre with the facts as stated by Mr. Dunn—who is apt, if anything, to lean to the Indian's side.

These foolish sentimentalists not only write foul slanders about their own countrymen, but are themselves the worst possible advisers on any point touching Indian management. They would do well to heed General Sheridan's bitter words, written when many Easterners were clamoring against the army authorities because they took partial vengeance for a series of brutal outrages: "I do not know how far these humanitarians should be excused on account of their ignorance; but surely it is the only excuse that can give a shadow of justification for aiding and abetting such horrid crimes."

CHAPTER V

THE BACKWOODSMEN OF THE ALLEGHANIES

1769–1774

Along the western frontier of the colonies that were so soon to be the United States, among the foot-hills of the Alleghanies, on the slopes of the wooded mountains, and in the long trough-like valleys that lay between the ranges, dwelt a peculiar and characteristically American people.

These frontier folk, the people of the up-country, or back-country, who lived near and among the forest-clad mountains, far away from the long-settled districts of flat coast plain and sluggish tidal river, were known to themselves and to others as backwoodsmen. They all bore a strong likeness to one another in their habits of thought and ways of living, and differed markedly from the people of the older and more civilized communities to the eastward. The western border of our country was then formed by the great barrier-chains of the Alleghanies, which ran north and south from Pennsylvania through Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, the trend of the valleys being parallel to the seacoast, and the mountains rising highest to the southward.[1] It was difficult to cross the ranges from east to west, but it was both easy and natural to follow the valleys between. From Fort Pitt to the high hill-homes of the Cherokees this great tract of wooded and mountainous country possessed nearly the same features and

[1] Georgia was then too weak and small to contribute much to the backwoods stock; her frontier was still in the low country.

characteristics, differing utterly in physical aspect from the alluvial plains bordering the ocean.

So, likewise, the backwoods mountaineers who dwelt near the great watershed that separates the Atlantic streams from the springs of the Watauga, the Kanawha, and the Monongahela, were all cast in the same mould, and resembled each other much more than any of them did their immediate neighbors of the plains. The backwoodsmen of Pennsylvania had little in common with the peaceful population of Quakers and Germans who lived between the Delaware and the Susquehanna; and their near kinsmen of the Blue Ridge and the Great Smoky Mountains were separated by an equally wide gulf from the aristocratic planter communities that flourished in the tide-water regions of Virginia and the Carolinas. Near the coast the lines of division between the colonies corresponded fairly well with the differences between the populations; but after striking the foothills, though the political boundaries continued to go east and west, those both of ethnic and of physical significance began to run north and south.

The backwoodsmen were Americans by birth and parentage, and of mixed race; but the dominant strain in their blood was that of the Presbyterian Irish—the Scotch-Irish, as they were often called. Full credit has been awarded the Roundhead and the Cavalier for their leadership in our history; nor have we been altogether blind to the deeds of the Hollander and the Huguenot; but it is doubtful if we have wholly realized the importance of the part played by that stern and virile people, the Irish whose preachers taught the creed of Knox and Calvin. These Irish representatives of the Covenanters were in the West almost what the Puritans were in the Northeast, and more than the Cavaliers were in the

South. Mingled with the descendants of many other races, they nevertheless formed the kernel of the distinctively and intensely American stock who were the pioneers of our people in their march westward, the vanguard of the army of fighting settlers, who, with axe and rifle, won their way from the Alleghanies to the Rio Grande and the Pacific.[1]

The Presbyterian Irish were themselves already a mixed people. Though mainly descended from Scotch ancestors—who came originally from both lowlands and highlands, from among both the Scotch Saxons and the Scotch Celts[2]—many of them were of English, a few of French Huguenot,[3] and quite a number of true old Milesian Irish[4] extraction. They were the Protestants of the Protestants; they detested and despised the Catholics, whom their ancestors had conquered, and regarded the Episcopalians, by whom they themselves had been oppressed, with a more sullen, but scarcely less intense,

[1] Among the dozen or so most prominent backwoods pioneers of the West and Southwest, the men who were the leaders in exploring and settling the lands, and in fighting the Indians, British, and Mexicans, the Presbyterian Irish stock furnished Andrew Jackson, Samuel Houston, David Crockett, James Robertson; Lewis, the leader of the backwoods hosts in their first great victory over the northwestern Indians; and Campbell, their commander in their first great victory over the British. The other pioneers who stand beside the above were such men as Sevier, a Shenandoah Huguenot; Shelby, of Welsh blood; and Boone and Clark, both of English stock, the former from Pennsylvania, the latter from Virginia.

[2] Of course, generations before they ever came to America, the McAfees, McClungs, Campbells, McCoshes, etc., had become indistinguishable from the Todds, Armstrongs, Elliotts, and the like.

[3] A notable instance being that of the Lewis family, of Great Kanawha fame.

[4] The Blount MSS. contain many muster-rolls and pay-rolls of the frontier forces of North Carolina during the year 1788. In these, and in the lists of names of settlers preserved in the *Am. State Papers*, Public Lands, II, etc., we find numerous names such as Shea, Drennan, O'Neil, O'Brien, Mahoney, Sullivan, O'Connell, Maguire, O'Donohue—in fact hardly a single Irish name is unrepresented. Of course, many of these were the descendants of imported Irish bond-servants; but many were also free immigrants, belonging to the Presbyterian congregations, and sometimes appearing as pastors thereof. For the numerous Irish names of prominent pioneers (such as Donelly, Hogan, etc.) see McClung's "Western Adventures" (Louisville, 1879), 52, 167, 207, 308, etc.; also De Haas, 236, 289, etc.; Doddridge, 16, 288, 301, etc.

hatred.[1] They were a truculent and obstinate people, and gloried in the warlike renown of their forefathers, the men who had followed Cromwell, and who had shared in the defense of Derry and in the victories of the Boyne and Aughrim.[2]

They did not begin to come to America in any numbers till after the opening of the eighteenth century; by 1730 they were fairly swarming across the ocean, for the most part in two streams, the larger going to the port of Philadelphia, the smaller to the port of Charleston.[3] Pushing through the long-settled lowlands of the seacoast, they at once made their abode at the foot of the mountains, and became the outposts of civilization. From Pennsylvania, whither the great majority had come, they drifted south along the foot-hills, and down the long valleys, till they met their brethren from Charleston who had pushed up into the Carolina backcountry. In this land of hills, covered by unbroken forest, they took root and flourished, stretching in a broad belt from north to south, a shield of sinewy men thrust in between the people of the seaboard and the red warriors of the wilderness. All through this region they were alike; they had as little kinship with the Cavalier as with the Quaker; the West was won by those who have been rightly called the Roundheads of the South, the same men who, before any others, declared for American independence.[4]

The two facts of most importance to remember in

[1] "Sketches of North Carolina," William Henry Foote, New York, 1846. An excellent book, written after much research.

[2] For a few among many instances: Houston (see Lane's "Life of Houston") had ancestors at Derry and Aughrim; the McAfees (see McAfee MSS.) and Irvine, one of the commanders on Crawford's expedition, were descendants of men who fought at the Boyne ("Crawford's Campaign," G. W. Butterfield, Cincinnati, 1873, p. 26); so with Lewis, Campbell, etc.

[3] Foote, 78

[4] Witness the Mecklenburg Declaration.

dealing with our pioneer history are, first, that the western portions of Virginia and the Carolinas were peopled by an entirely different stock from that which had long existed in the tide-water regions of those colonies; and, secondly, that, except for those in the Carolinas who came from Charleston, the immigrants of this stock were mostly from the North, from their great breeding-ground and nursery in western Pennsylvania.[1]

That these Irish Presbyterians were a bold and hardy race is proved by their at once pushing past the settled regions, and plunging into the wilderness as the leaders of the white advance. They were the first and last set of immigrants to do this; all others have merely followed in the wake of their predecessors. But, indeed, they were fitted to be Americans from the very start; they were kinsfolk of the Covenanters; they deemed it a religious duty to interpret their own Bible, and held for a divine right the election of their own clergy. For generations their whole ecclesiastic and scholastic systems had been fundamentally democratic. In the hard life of the frontier they lost much of their religion, and they had but scant opportunity to give their children the schooling in which they believed; but what few meeting-houses and schoolhouses there were on the border were theirs.[2] The numerous families of colonial English who came among them adopted their religion if they adopted any. The creed of the backwoodsman

[1] McAfee MSS. "Trans-Alleghany Pioneers" (John P. Hale), XVII. Foote, 188. See also *Columbian Magazine*, I, 122, and Schöpf, 406. Boone, Crockett, Houston, Campbell, Lewis, were among the southwestern pioneers whose families originally came from Pennsylvania. See "Annals of Augusta County, Va.," by Joseph A. Waddell, Richmond, 1888 (an excellent book), pp. 4, 276, 278, for a clear showing of the Presbyterian Irish origin of the West Virginians, and of the large German admixture.

[2] The Irish schoolmaster was everywhere a feature of early Western society.

who had a creed at all was Presbyterianism; for the Episcopacy of the tide-water lands obtained no foothold in the mountains, and the Methodists and Baptists had but just begun to appear in the West when the Revolution broke out.[1]

These Presbyterian Irish were, however, far from being the only settlers on the border, although more than any others they impressed the stamp of their peculiar character on the pioneer civilization of the West and Southwest. Great numbers of immigrants of English descent came among them from the settled districts on the east; and though these later arrivals soon became indistinguishable from the people among whom they settled, yet they certainly sometimes added a tone of their own to backwoods society, giving it here and there a slight dash of what we are accustomed to consider the distinctively Southern or cavalier spirit.[2] There was likewise a large German admixture, not only from the Germans of Pennsylvania, but also from those of the Carolinas.[3] A good many Huguenots likewise

[1] McAfee MSS. MS. Autobiography of Rev. Wm. Hickman, born in Virginia in 1747 (in Col. R. T. Durrett's library). "Trans-Alleghany Pioneers," 147. "History of Kentucky Baptists," J. H. Spencer (Cincinnati, 1885).

[2] Boone, though of English descent, had no Virginia blood in his veins; he was an exact type of the regular backwoodsman; but in Clark, and still more in Blount, we see strong traces of the "cavalier spirit." Of course, the Cavaliers no more formed the bulk of the Virginia people than they did of Rupert's armies; but the squires and yeomen who went to make up the mass took their tone from their leaders.

[3] Many of the most noted hunters and Indian fighters were of German origin. (See "Early Times in Middle Tennessee," John Carr, Nashville, 1859, pp. 54 and 56, for Steiner and Mansker—or Stoner and Mansco.) Such were the Wetzels, famous in border annals, who lived near Wheeling; Michael Steiner, the Steiners being the forefathers of many of the numerous Kentucky Stoners of to-day; and Kasper Mansker, the "Mr. Mansco" of Tennessee writers. Every old Western narrative contains many allusions to "Dutchmen," as Americans very improperly call the Germans. Their names abound on the muster-rolls, pay-rolls, lists of settlers, etc., of the day (Blount MSS., State Department MSS., McAfee MSS., *Am. State Papers*, etc.); but it must be remembered that they are often Anglicized, when nothing remains to show the origin of the owners. We could not recognize in Cus-

came,[1] and a few Hollanders[2] and even Swedes,[3] from the banks of the Delaware, or perhaps from farther off still.

A single generation, passed under the hard conditions of life in the wilderness, was enough to weld together into one people the representatives of these numerous and widely different races; and the children of the next generation became indistinguishable from one another. Long before the first Continental Congress assembled, the backwoodsmen, whatever their blood, had become Americans, one in speech, thought, and character, clutching firmly the land in which their fathers and grandfathers had lived before them. They had lost all remembrance of Europe and all sympathy with things European; they had become as emphatically products native to the soil as were the tough and supple hickories out of which they fashioned the handles of their long, light axes. Their grim, harsh, narrow lives were yet strangely fascinating and full of adventurous toil and

ter and Herkomer, Küster and Herckheimer, were not the ancestral history of the two generals already known; and in the backwoods, a man often loses sight of his ancestors in a couple of generations. In the Carolinas the Germans seem to have been almost as plentiful on the frontiers as the Irish (see Adair, 245, and Smyth's "Tour," I, 236). In Pennsylvania they lived nearer civilization (Schoolcraft, 3, 335; "Journey in the West in 1785," by Lewis Brantz), although also mixed with the borderers; the more adventurous among them naturally seeking the frontier.

[1] Giving to the backwoods society such families as the Seviers and Lenoirs. The Huguenots, like the Germans, frequently had their names Anglicized. The best known and most often quoted example is that of the Blancpied family, part of whom have become Whitefoots, while the others, living on the coast, have suffered a marvellous sea-change, the name reappearing as "Blumpy."

[2] To the Western American, who was not given to nice ethnic distinctions, both German and Hollander were simply Dutchmen; but occasionally we find names like Van Meter, Van Buskirk, Van Swearingen, which carry their origin on their faces (De Haas, 317, 319; Doddridge, 307).

[3] The Scandinavian names, in an unlettered community, soon become indistinguishable from those of the surrounding Americans—Jansen, Petersen, etc., being readily Americanized. It is, therefore, rarely that they show their parentage. Still, we now and then come across one that is unmistakable, as Erickson, for instance (see p. 51 of Colonel Reuben T. Durrett's admirable "Life and Writings of John Filson," Louisville and Cincinnati, 1884).

danger; none but natures as strong, as freedom-loving, and as full of bold defiance as theirs could have endured existence on the terms which these men found pleasurable. Their iron surroundings made a mould which turned out all alike in the same shape. They resembled one another, and they differed from the rest of the world —even the world of America, and infinitely more, the world of Europe—in dress, in customs, and in mode of life.

Where their lands abutted on the more settled districts to the eastward, the population was of course thickest, and their peculiarities least. Here and there at such points they built small backwoods burgs or towns, rude, straggling, unkempt villages, with a store or two, a tavern—sometimes good, often a "scandalous hog-sty," where travellers were devoured by fleas, and every one slept and ate in one room[1]—a small log schoolhouse, and a little church, presided over by a hard-featured Presbyterian preacher, gloomy, earnest, and zealous, probably bigoted and narrow-minded, but nevertheless a great power for good in the community.[2]

However, the backwoodsmen as a class neither built towns nor loved to dwell therein. They were to be seen at their best in the vast, interminable forests that formed their chosen home. They won and kept their lands by force, and ever lived either at war or in dread of war. Hence they settled always in groups of several families each, all banded together for mutual protection. Their red foes were strong and terrible, cunning

[1] MS. Journal of Matthew Clarkson, 1766. See also "Voyage dans les États-Unis," La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Paris, L'An VII, I, 104.

[2] The borderers had the true Calvinistic taste in preaching. Clarkson, in his journal of his Western trip, mentions with approval a sermon he heard as being "a very judicious and alarming discourse."

in council, dreadful in battle, merciless beyond belief in victory. The men of the border did not overcome and dispossess cowards and weaklings; they marched forth to spoil the stout-hearted and to take for a prey the possessions of the men of might. Every acre, every rood of ground which they claimed had to be cleared by the axe and held with the rifle. Not only was the chopping down of the forests the first preliminary to cultivation, but it was also the surest means of subduing the Indians, to whom the unending stretches of choked woodland were an impenetrable cover behind which to move unseen, a shield in making assaults, and a strong tower of defense in repelling counter-attacks. In the conquest of the West the backwoods axe, shapely, well-poised, with long haft and light head, was a servant hardly standing second even to the rifle; the two were the national weapons of the American backwoodsman, and in their use he has never been excelled.

When a group of families moved out into the wilderness they built themselves a station or stockade fort: a square palisade of upright logs, loopholed, with strong blockhouses as bastions at the corners. One side at least was generally formed by the backs of the cabins themselves, all standing in a row; and there was a great door or gate, that could be strongly barred in case of need. Often no iron whatever was employed in any of the buildings. The square inside contained the provision sheds and frequently a strong central blockhouse as well. These forts, of course, could not stand against cannon, and they were always in danger when attacked with fire; but save for this risk of burning they were very effectual defenses against men without artillery, and were rarely taken, whether by whites or Indians, except by surprise. Few other buildings have played

so important a part in our history as the rough stockade fort of the backwoods.

The families only lived in the fort when there was war with the Indians, and even then not in the winter. At other times they all separated out to their own farms, universally called clearings, as they were always made by first cutting off the timber. The stumps were left to dot the fields of grain and Indian corn. The corn in especial was the stand-by and invariable resource of the Western settler; it was the crop on which he relied to feed his family, and when hunting or on a war trail the parched grains were carried in his leather wallet to serve often as his only food. But he planted orchards and raised melons, potatoes, and many other fruits and vegetables as well; and he had usually a horse or two, cows, and perhaps hogs and sheep, if the wolves and bears did not interfere. If he was poor his cabin was made of unhewn logs, and held but a single room; if well-to-do, the logs were neatly hewed, and besides the large living and eating room with its huge stone fireplace, there was also a small bedroom and a kitchen, while a ladder led to the loft above, in which the boys slept. The floor was made of puncheons, great slabs of wood hewed carefully out, and the roof of clapboards. Pegs of wood were thrust into the sides of the house, to serve instead of a wardrobe; and buck antlers, thrust into joists, held the ever-ready rifles. The table was a great clapboard set on four wooden legs; there were three-legged stools, and in the better sort of houses old-fashioned rocking-chairs.[1] The couch or bed was warmly covered with blankets, bearskins, and deer-hides.[2]

[1] McAfee MSS.

[2] In the McAfee MSS. there is an amusing mention of the skin of a huge bull elk, killed by the father, which the youngsters christened "old ellick"; they used to quarrel for the possession of it on cold nights, as it was very warm, though if the hair side was turned in it became slippery and apt to slide off the bed.

These clearings lay far apart from one another in the wilderness. Up to the door-sills of the log huts stretched the solemn and mysterious forest. There were no openings to break its continuity; nothing but endless leagues on leagues of shadowy, wolf-haunted woodland. The great trees towered aloft till their separate heads were lost in the mass of foliage above, and the rank underbrush choked the spaces between the trunks. On the higher peaks and ridge crests of the mountains there were straggling birches and pines, hemlocks and balsam firs;[1] elsewhere, oaks, chestnuts, hickories, maples, beeches, walnuts, and great tulip-trees grew side by side with many other kinds. The sunlight could not penetrate the roofed archway of murmuring leaves; through the gray aisles of the forest men walked always in a kind of midday gloaming. Those who had lived in the open plains felt when they came to the backwoods as if their heads were hooded. Save on the border of a lake, from a cliff-top, or on a bald knob—that is, a bare hill-shoulder—they could not anywhere look out for any distance.

All the land was shrouded in one vast forest. It covered the mountains from crest to river-bed, filled the plains, and stretched in sombre and melancholy wastes toward the Mississippi. All that it contained, all that lay hid within it and beyond it, none could tell; men only knew that their boldest hunters, however deeply they had penetrated, had not yet gone through it, that it was the home of the game they followed and the wild beasts that preyed on their flocks, and that deep in its tangled depths lurked their red foes, hawk-eyed and wolf-hearted.

[1] On the mountains the climate, flora, and fauna were all those of the North, not of the adjacent Southern lowlands. The ruffed grouse, red squirrel, snowbird, various Canadian warblers, and a peculiar species of boreal field-mouse, the *evotomys*, are all found as far south as the Great Smokies.

Backwoods society was simple, and the duties and rights of each member of the family were plain and clear. The man was the armed protector and provider, the bread-winner; the woman was the housewife and child-bearer. They married young and their families were large, for they were strong and healthy, and their success in life depended on their own stout arms and willing hearts. There was everywhere great equality of conditions. Land was plenty and all else scarce; so courage, thrift, and industry were sure of their reward. All had small farms, with the few stock necessary to cultivate them; the farms being generally placed in the hollows, the division lines between them, if they were close together, being the tops of the ridges and the watercourses, especially the former. The buildings of each farm were usually at its lowest point, as if in the centre of an amphitheatre.[1] Each was on an average of about four hundred acres,[2] but sometimes more.[3] Tracts of low, swampy grounds, possibly some miles from the cabin, were cleared for meadows, the fodder being stacked, and hauled home in winter.

Each backwoodsman was not only a small farmer but also a hunter; for his wife and children depended for their meat upon the venison and bear's flesh pro-

[1] Doddridge's "Settlements and Indian Wars" (133), written by an eye-witness; it is the most valuable book we have on old-time frontier ways and customs.

[2] The land-laws differed at different times in different colonies; but this was the usual size, at the outbreak of the Revolution, of the farms along the Western frontier, as under the laws of Virginia, then obtaining from the Holston to the Alleghany, this amount was allotted every settler who built a cabin or raised a crop of corn.

[3] Besides the right to four hundred acres, there was also a pre-emption right to one thousand acres more adjoining, to be secured by a land-office warrant. As between themselves, the settlers had what they called "tomahawk rights," made by simply deadening a certain number of trees with a hatchet. They were similar to the rights conferred in the West now by what is called a "claim shack" or hut, built to hold some good piece of land; that is, they conferred no title whatever, except that sometimes men would pay for them rather than have trouble with the claimant.

cured by his rifle. The people were restless and always on the move. After being a little while in a place, some of the men would settle down permanently, while others would again drift off, farming and hunting alternately to support their families.[1] The backwoodsman's dress was in great part borrowed from his Indian foes. He wore a fur cap or felt hat, moccasins, and either loose, thin trousers, or else simply leggings of buckskin or elk-hide, and the Indian breech-clout. He was always clad in the fringed hunting-shirt, of homespun or buckskin, the most picturesque and distinctively national dress ever worn in America. It was a loose smock or tunic, reaching nearly to the knees, and held in at the waist by a broad belt, from which hung the tomahawk and scalping-knife.[2] His weapon was the long, small-bore, flint-lock rifle, clumsy, and ill-balanced, but exceedingly accurate. It was very heavy, and when upright, reached to the chin of a tall man; for the barrel of thick, soft iron, was four feet in length, while the stock was short, and the butt scooped out. Sometimes it was plain, sometimes ornamented. It was generally bored out—or, as the expression then was, "sawed out"—to carry a ball of seventy, more rarely of thirty or forty, to the pound; and was usually of backwoods manufacture.[3] The marksman almost always fired from a rest, and rarely at a very long range; and the shooting was marvellously accurate.[4]

[1] McAfee MSS. (particularly "Autobiography of Robert McAfee.")

[2] To this day it is worn in parts of the Rocky Mountains, and even occasionally, here and there, in the Alleghanies.

[3] The above is the description of one of Boone's rifles, now in the possession of Colonel Durrett. According to the inscription on the barrel it was made in Louisville, Ky., in 1782, by M. Humble. It is perfectly plain; whereas one of Floyd's rifles, which I have also seen, is much more highly finished, and with some ornamentation.

[4] For the opinion of a foreign military observer on the phenomenal accuracy of backwoods marksmanship, see General Victor Collot's "Voyage en Amérique," p. 242.

In the backwoods there was very little money; barter was the common form of exchange, and peltries were often used as a circulating medium, a beaver, otter, fisher, dressed buckskin or large bearskin being reckoned as equal to two foxes or wildcats, four coons, or eight minks.[1] A young man inherited nothing from his father but his strong frame and eager heart; but before him lay a whole continent wherein to pitch his farm, and he felt ready to marry as soon as he became of age, even though he had nothing but his clothes, his horses, his axe, and his rifle.[2] If a girl was well off, and had been careful and industrious, she might herself bring a dowry, of a cow and a calf, a brood-mare, a bed well stocked with blankets, and a chest containing her clothes[3]—the latter not very elaborate, for a woman's dress consisted of a hat or poke bonnet, a "bedgown," perhaps a jacket, and a linsey petticoat, while her feet were thrust into coarse shoepacks or moccasins. Fine clothes were rare; a suit of such cost more than two hundred acres of good land.[4]

The first lesson the backwoodsmen learnt was the necessity of self-help; the next, that such a community could only thrive if all joined in helping one another. Log-rollings, house-raisings, house-warmings, corn-shuckings, quiltings, and the like were occasions when all the neighbors came together to do what the family itself could hardly accomplish alone. Every such meeting was the occasion of a frolic and dance for the young people, whiskey and rum being plentiful, and the host exerting his utmost power to spread the table with backwoods delicacies—bear meat and venison, vegetables

[1] MS. copy of Matthew Clarkson's journal in 1766.

[2] McAfee MSS. ("Autobiography of Robert McAfee"). [3] *Ibid.*

[4] "Memoirs of the Hist. Soc. of Penn.," 1826. Account of first settlements, etc., by John Watson (1804).

from the "truck-patch," where squashes, melons, beans, and the like were grown, wild fruits, bowls of milk, and apple pies, which were the acknowledged standard of luxury.[1] At the better houses there was metheglin or small beer, cider, cheese, and biscuits. Tea was so little known that many of the backwoods people were not aware it was a beverage and at first attempted to eat the leaves with salt or butter.[2]

The young men prided themselves on their bodily strength, and were always eager to contend against one another in athletic games, such as wrestling, racing, jumping, and lifting flour-barrels; and they also sought distinction in vying with one another at their work. Sometimes they strove against one another singly, sometimes they divided into parties, each bending all its energies to be first in shucking a given heap of corn or cutting (with sickles) an allotted patch of wheat. Among the men the bravos or bullies often were dandies, also in the backwoods fashions, wearing their hair long and delighting in the rude finery of hunting-shirts embroidered with porcupine quills; they were loud, boastful, and profane, given to coarsely bantering one another. Brutally savage fights were frequent; the combatants, who were surrounded by rings of interested spectators, striking, kicking, biting, and gouging. The fall of one of them did not stop the fight, for the man who was down was maltreated without mercy until he called "enough." The victor always bragged savagely of his prowess, often leaping on a stump, crowing and flapping his arms. This last was a thoroughly American touch; but otherwise one of these contests

[1] *Ibid.* An admirable account of what such a frolic was some thirty-five years later is to be found in Edward Eggleston's "Circuit Rider."

[2] Such incidents are mentioned again and again by Watson, Milfort, Doddridge, Carr, and other writers.

was less a boxing-match than a kind of backwoods *pankrátion*, no less revolting than its ancient prototype of Olympic fame. Yet, if the uncouth borderers were as brutal as the highly polished Greeks, they were more manly; defeat was not necessarily considered disgrace, a man often fighting when he was certain to be beaten, while the onlookers neither hooted nor pelted the conquered. We first hear of the noted Indian fighter, Simon Kenton, as leaving a rival for dead after one of these ferocious duels, and fleeing from his home in terror of the punishment that might follow the deed.[1] Such fights were specially frequent when the backwoodsmen went into the little frontier towns to see horse-races or fairs.

A wedding was always a time of festival. If there was a church anywhere near, the bride rode thither on horseback behind her father, and after the service her pillion was shifted to the bridegroom's steed.[2] If, as generally happened, there was no church, the groom and his friends, all armed, rode to the house of the bride's father, plenty of whiskey being drunk, and the men racing recklessly along the narrow bridle-paths, for there were few roads or wheeled vehicles in the back-

[1] McClung's "Western Adventures." All Eastern and European observers comment with horror on the border brawls, especially the eye-gouging. Englishmen, of course, in true provincial spirit, complacently contrasted them with their own boxing-fights; Frenchmen, equally of course, were more struck by the resemblances than the differences between the two forms of combat. Milfort gives a very amusing account of the *Anglo-Américains d'une espèce particulière* whom he calls "*crakeurs ou gaugeurs*" (crackers or gougers). He remarks that he found them *tous borgnes* (as a result of their pleasant fashion of eye-gouging—a backwoods bully in speaking of another would often threaten to "measure the length of his eye-strings") and that he doubts if there can exist in the world *des hommes plus méchants que ces habitants.*

These fights were among the numerous backwoods habits that showed Scotch rather than English ancestry. "I attempted to keep him down, in order to improve my success, after the manner of my own country" ("Roderick Random").

[2] Watson.

woods. At the bride's house the ceremony was performed, and then a huge dinner was eaten; after which the fiddling and dancing began, and were continued all the afternoon, and most of the night as well. A party of girls stole off the bride and put her to bed in the loft above; and a party of young men then performed the like service for the groom. The fun was hearty and coarse, and the toasts always included one to the young couple with the wish that they might have many big children; for as long as they could remember the backwoodsmen had lived at war, while looking ahead they saw no chance of its ever stopping, and so each son was regarded as a future warrior, a help to the whole community.[1] The neighbors all joined again in chopping and rolling the logs for the young couple's future house, then in raising the house itself, and finally in feasting and dancing at the housewarming.

Funerals were simple, the dead body being carried to the grave in a coffin slung on poles and borne by four men.

There was not much schooling, and few boys or girls learnt much more than reading, writing, and ciphering up to the rule of three.[2] Where the schoolhouses existed they were only dark, mean log huts, and, if in the Southern colonies, were generally placed in the so-called "old fields," or abandoned farms grown up with pines. The schoolmaster boarded about with the families; his learning was rarely great, nor was his discipline good, in spite of the frequency and severity of the canings. The price for such tuition was at the rate of twenty shillings a year, in Pennsylvania currency.[3]

Each family did everything that could be done for itself. The father and sons worked with axe, hoe, and

[1] Doddridge. [2] McAfee MSS. [3] Watson.

sickle. Almost every house contained a loom, and almost every woman was a weaver. Linsey-woolsey, made from flax grown near the cabin, and of wool from the backs of the few sheep, was the warmest and most substantial cloth; and when the flax-crop failed and the flocks were destroyed by wolves, the children had but scanty covering to hide their nakedness. The man tanned the buckskin, the woman was tailor and shoemaker, and made the deerskin sifters to be used instead of bolting-cloths. There were a few pewter spoons in use; but the table furniture consisted mainly of hand-made trenchers, platters, noggins, and bowls. The cradle was of peeled hickory bark.[1] Ploughshares had to be imported, but harrows and sleds were made without difficulty; and the cooper work was well done. Chaff beds were thrown on the floor of the loft, if the house-owner was well off. Each cabin had a hand-mill and a hominy-block; the last was borrowed from the Indians, and was only a large block of wood, with a hole burned in the top, as a mortar, where the pestle was worked. If there were any sugar-maples accessible, they were tapped every year.

But some articles, especially salt and iron, could not be produced in the backwoods. In order to get them each family collected during the year all the furs possible, these being valuable and yet easily carried on pack-horses, the sole means of transport. Then, after seeding-time, in the fall, the people of a neighborhood ordinarily joined in sending down a train of peltry-laden pack-horses to some large seacoast or tidal-river trading town, where their burdens were bartered for the needed iron and salt. The unshod horses all had bells hung round their necks; the clappers were stopped dur-

[1] McAfee MSS. See, also, Doddridge and Watson.

ing the day, but when the train was halted for the night, and the horses were hobbled and turned loose, the bells were once more unstopped.[1] Several men accompanied each little caravan, and sometimes they drove with them steers and hogs to sell on the seacoast. A bushel of alum salt was worth a good cow and calf, and as each of the poorly fed, undersized pack-animals could carry but two bushels, the mountaineers prized it greatly, and, instead of salting or pickling their venison, they jerked it by drying it in the sun or smoking it over a fire.

The life of the backwoodsmen was one long struggle. The forest had to be felled; droughts, deep snows, freshets, cloudbursts, forest-fires, and all the other dangers of a wilderness life faced. Swarms of deer-flies, mosquitoes, and midges rendered life a torment in the weeks of hot weather. Rattlesnakes and copperheads were very plentiful, and, the former especially, constant sources of danger and death. Wolves and bears were incessant and inveterate foes of the live stock, and the cougar, or panther, occasionally attacked man as well.[2] More terrible still, the wolves sometimes went mad, and the men who then encountered them were almost certain to be bitten and to die of hydrophobia.[3]

[1] Doddridge, 156. He gives an interesting anecdote of one man engaged in helping such a pack-train, the bell of whose horse was stolen. The thief was recovered, and whipped as a punishment, the owner exclaiming as he laid the strokes lustily on: "Think what a rascally figure I should make in the streets of Baltimore without a bell on my horse." He had never been out of the woods before; he naturally wished to look well on his first appearance in civilized life, and it never occurred to him that a good horse was left without a bell anywhere.

[2] An instance of this, which happened in my mother's family, has been mentioned elsewhere ("Hunting Trips of a Ranchman"). Even the wolves occasionally attacked man; Audubon gives an example.

[3] Doddridge, 194. Dodge, in his "Hunting Grounds of the Great West," gives some recent instances. Bears were sometimes dangerous to human life. Doddridge, 64. A slave on the plantation of my great-grandfather in Georgia was once regularly scalped by a she bear whom he had tried to rob of her cubs, and ever after he was called, both by the other negroes and by the children on the plantation, "Bear Bob."

Every true backwoodsman was a hunter. Wild turkeys were plentiful. The pigeons at times filled the woods with clouds that hid the sun and broke down the branches on their roosting-grounds as if a whirlwind had passed. The black and gray squirrels swarmed, devastating the corn-fields, and at times gathering in immense companies and migrating across mountain and river. The hunter's ordinary game was the deer, and after that the bear; the elk was already growing uncommon. No form of labor is harder than the chase, and none is so fascinating nor so excellent as a training-school for war. The successful still-hunter of necessity possessed skill in hiding and in creeping noiselessly upon the wary quarry, as well as in imitating the notes and calls of the different beasts and birds; skill in the use of the rifle and in throwing the tomahawk he already had; and he perforce acquired keenness of eye, thorough acquaintance with woodcraft, and the power of standing the severest strains of fatigue, hardship, and exposure. He lived out in the woods for many months with no food but meat, and no shelter whatever, unless he made a lean-to of brush or crawled into a hollow sycamore.

Such training stood the frontier folk in good stead when they were pitted against the Indians; without it they could not even have held their own, and the white advance would have been absolutely checked. Our frontiers were pushed westward by the warlike skill and adventurous personal prowess of the individual settlers; regular armies by themselves could have done little. For one square mile the regular armies added to our domain, the settlers added ten—a hundred would probably be nearer the truth. A race of peaceful, unwarlike farmers would have been helpless before such foes as

the red Indians, and no auxiliary military force could have protected them or enabled them to move westward. Colonists fresh from the Old World, no matter how thrifty, steady-going, and industrious, could not hold their own on the frontier; they had to settle where they were protected from the Indians by a living barrier of bold and self-reliant American borderers.[1] The West would never have been settled save for the fierce courage and the eager desire to brave danger so characteristic of the stalwart backwoodsmen.

These armed hunters, wood-choppers, and farmers were their own soldiers. They built and manned their own forts; they did their own fighting under their own commanders. There were no regiments of regular troops along the frontier.[2] In the event of an Indian inroad each borderer had to defend himself until there was time for them all to gather together to repel or avenge it. Every man was accustomed to the use of arms from his childhood; when a boy was twelve years old he was given a rifle and made a fort-soldier, with a loophole where he was to stand if the station was attacked. The war was never-ending, for even the times of so-called peace were broken by forays and murders; a man might grow from babyhood to middle age on the border, and yet never remember a year in which some one of his neighbors did not fall a victim to the Indians.

There was everywhere a rude military organization, which included all the able-bodied men of the community. Every settlement had its colonels and captains; but these officers, both in their training and in the authority they exercised, corresponded much more

[1] Schöpf, I, 404.

[2] The insignificant garrisons at one or two places need not be taken into account, as they were of absolutely no effect.

nearly to Indian chiefs than to the regular army men whose titles they bore. They had no means whatever of enforcing their orders, and their tumultuous and disorderly levies of sinewy riflemen were hardly as well disciplined as the Indians themselves.[1] The superior officer could advise, entreat, lead, and influence his men, but he could not command them, or, if he did, the men obeyed him only just so far as it suited them. If an officer planned a scout or campaign, those who thought proper accompanied him, and the others stayed at home, and even those who went out came back if the fit seized them, or perchance followed the lead of an insubordinate junior officer whom they liked better than they did his superior.[2] There was no compulsion to perform military duties beyond dread of being disgraced in the eyes of the neighbors, and there was no pecuniary reward for performing them; nevertheless the moral sentiment of a backwoods community was too robust to tolerate habitual remissness in military affairs, and the coward and laggard were treated with utter scorn, and were generally in the end either laughed out, or "hated out," of the neighborhood, or else got rid of in a still more summary manner. Among people naturally brave

[1] Brantz Mayer, in "Tah-Gah-Jute, or Logan and Cresap" (Albany, 1867), IX, speaks of the pioneers as "comparatively few in numbers," and of the Indian as "numerous, and fearing not only the superior weapons of his foe, but the organization and discipline which together made the comparatively few equal to the greater number." This sentence embodies a variety of popular misconceptions. The pioneers were more numerous than the Indians; the Indians were generally, at least in the Northwest, as well armed as the whites, and in military matters the Indians were actually (see Smith's narrative, and almost all competent authorities) superior in organization and discipline to their pioneer foes. Most of our battles against the Indians of the Western woods, whether won or lost, were fought by superior numbers on our side. Individually, or in small parties, the frontiersmen gradually grew to be a match for the Indians, man for man, at least in many cases, but this was only true of large bodies of them if they were commanded by some one naturally able to control their unruly spirits.

[2] As examples take Clark's last Indian campaign and the battle of Blue Licks.

and reckless, this public opinion acted fairly effectively, and there was generally but little shrinking from military service.[1]

A backwoods levy was formidable because of the high average courage and prowess of the individuals composing it; it was on its own ground much more effective than a like force of regular soldiers, but of course it could not be trusted on a long campaign. The backwoodsmen used their rifles better than the Indians, and also stood punishment better, but they never matched them in surprises nor in skill in taking advantage of cover, and very rarely equalled their discipline in the battle itself. After all, the pioneer was primarily a husbandman; the time spent in chopping trees and tilling the soil his foe spent in preparing for or practising forest warfare, and so the former, thanks to the exercise of the very qualities which in the end gave him the possession of the soil, could not, as a rule, hope to rival his antagonist in the actual conflict itself. When large bodies of the red men and white borderers were pitted against each other, the former were if anything the more likely to have the advantage.[2] But the whites soon copied from the Indians their system of individual and private warfare, and they probably caused their foes far more damage and loss in this way than in the large expeditions. Many noted border scouts and Indian fighters —such men as Boone, Kenton, Wetzel, Brady, McCul-

[1] Doddridge, 161, 185.

[2] At the best such a frontier levy was composed of men of the type of Leatherstocking, Ishmael Bush, Tom Hutter, Harry March, Bill Kirby, and Aaron Thousandacres. When animated by a common and overmastering passion, such a body would be almost irresistible; but it could not hold together long, and there was generally a plentiful mixture of men less trained in woodcraft, and therefore useless in forest fighting; while if, as must generally be the case in any body, there were a number of cowards in the ranks, the total lack of discipline not only permitted them to flinch from their work with impunity, but also allowed them, by their example, to infect and demoralize their braver companions.

loch, Mansker[1]—grew to overmatch their Indian foes at their own game, and held themselves above the most renowned warriors. But these men carried the spirit of defiant self-reliance to such an extreme that their best work was always done when they were alone or in small parties of but four or five. They made long forays after scalps and horses, going a wonderful distance, enduring extreme hardship, risking the most terrible of deaths, and harrying the hostile tribes into a madness of terror and revengeful hatred.

As it was in military matters, so it was with the administration of justice by the frontiersmen; they had few courts, and knew but little law, and yet they contrived to preserve order and morality with rough effectiveness, by combining to frown down on the grosser misdeeds, and to punish the more flagrant misdoers. Perhaps the spirit in which they acted can best be shown by the recital of an incident in the career of the three McAfee brothers,[2] who were among the pioneer hunters of Kentucky. Previous to trying to move their families out to the new country, they made a cache of clothing, implements, and provisions, which in their absence was broken into and plundered. They caught the thief, "a little diminutive, red-headed white man," a runaway convict servant from one of the tide-water counties of Virginia. In the first impulse of anger at finding that he was the criminal, one of the McAfees rushed at him to kill him with his tomahawk; but the weapon turned, the man was only knocked down, and his assailant's gusty anger subsided as quickly as it had risen, giving

[1] Haywood, De Haas, Withers, McClung, and other border annalists, give innumerable anecdotes about these and many other men, illustrating their feats of fierce prowess, and, too often, of brutal ferocity.

[2] McAfee MSS. The story is told both in the "Autobiography of Robert McAfee" and in the "History of the First Settlement on Salt River."

way to a desire to do stern but fair justice. So the three captors formed themselves into a court, examined into the case, heard the man in his own defense, and after due consultation decided that "according to their opinion of the laws he had forfeited his life, and ought to be hung"; but none of them were willing to execute the sentence in cold blood, and they ended by taking their prisoner back to his master.

The incident was characteristic in more than one way. The prompt desire of the backwoodsman to avenge his own wrong; his momentary furious anger, speedily quelled and replaced by a dogged determination to be fair but to exact full retribution; the acting entirely without regard to legal forms or legal officials, but yet in a spirit which spoke well for the doer's determination to uphold the essentials that make honest men law-abiding; together with the good faith of the whole proceeding, and the amusing ignorance that it would have been in the least unlawful to execute their own rather harsh sentence—all these were typical frontier traits. Some of the same traits appear in the treatment commonly adopted in the backwoods to meet the case—of painfully frequent occurrence in the times of Indian wars—where a man taken prisoner by the savages, and supposed to be murdered, returned after two or three years' captivity, only to find his wife married again. In the wilderness a husband was almost a necessity to a woman; her surroundings made the loss of the protector and provider an appalling calamity; and the widow, no matter how sincere her sorrow, soon remarried—for there were many suitors where women were not overplenty. If in such a case the one thought dead returned, the neighbors and the parties interested seem frequently to have held a sort of informal court,

and to have decided that the woman should choose either of the two men she wished to be her husband, the other being pledged to submit to the decision and leave the settlement. Evidently no one had the least idea that there was any legal irregularity in such proceedings.[1]

The McAfees themselves and the escaped convict servant whom they captured typify the two prominent classes of the backwoods people. The frontier, in spite of the outward uniformity of means and manners, is pre-eminently the place of sharp contrasts. The two extremes of society—the strongest, best, and most adventurous, and the weakest, most shiftless, and vicious —are those which seem naturally to drift to the border. Most of the men who came to the backwoods to hew out homes and rear families were stern, manly, and honest; but there was also a large influx of people drawn from the worst immigrants that perhaps ever were brought to America—the mass of convict servants, redemptioners, and the like, who formed such an excessively undesirable substratum to the otherwise excellent population of the tide-water regions in Virginia and the Carolinas.[2] Many of the Southern crackers or poor whites spring from this class, which also in the backwoods gave birth to generations of violent and hardened criminals, and to an even greater number of shiftless, lazy, cowardly cumberers of the earth's surface. They had in many places a permanently bad effect upon the tone of the whole community.

Moreover, the influence of heredity was no more

[1] Incidents of this sort are frequently mentioned. Generally, the woman went back to her first husband. "Early Times in Middle Tennessee," John Carr, Nashville, 1859, p. 231.

[2] See "A Short History of the English Colonies in America," by Henry Cabot Lodge (New York, 1886), for an account of these people.

plainly perceptible than was the extent of individual variation. If a member of a bad family wished to reform, he had every opportunity to do so; if a member of a good family had vicious propensities, there was nothing to check them. All qualities, good and bad, are intensified and accentuated in the life of the wilderness. The man who in civilization is merely sullen and bad-tempered becomes a murderous, treacherous ruffian when transplanted to the wilds; while, on the other hand, his cheery, quiet neighbor develops into a hero, ready uncomplainingly to lay down his life for his friend. One who in an Eastern city is merely a backbiter and slanderer, in the Western woods lies in wait for his foe with a rifle; sharp practice in the East becomes highway robbery in the West; but at the same time negative good-nature becomes active self-sacrifice, and a general belief in virtue is translated into a prompt and determined war upon vice. The ne'er-do-well of a family who in one place has his debts paid a couple of times and is then forced to resign from his clubs and lead a cloudy but innocuous existence on a small pension, in the other abruptly finishes his career by being hung for horse-stealing.

In the backwoods the lawless led lives of abandoned wickedness; they hated good for good's sake, and did their utmost to destroy it. Where the bad element was large, gangs of horse thieves, highwaymen, and other criminals often united with the uncontrollable young men of vicious tastes, who were given to gambling, fighting, and the like. They then formed half-secret organizations, often of great extent and with wide ramifications; and if they could control a community they established a reign of terror, driving out both ministers and magistrates, and killing without scruple those who inter-

fered with them. The good men in such a case banded themselves together as regulators and put down the wicked with ruthless severity, by the exercise of lynch-law, shooting and hanging the worst offhand.[1]

Jails were scarce in the wilderness, and often were entirely wanting in a district, which, indeed, was quite likely to lack legal officers also. If punishment was inflicted at all it was apt to be severe, and took the form of death or whipping. An impromptu jury of neighbors decided with a rough-and-ready sense of fair play and justice what punishment the crime demanded, and then saw to the execution of their own decree. Whipping was the usual reward of theft. Occasionally, torture was resorted to, but not often; and, to their honor be it said, the backwoodsmen were horrified at the treatment accorded both to black slaves and to white convict servants in the lowlands.[2]

They were superstitious, of course, believing in witchcraft and signs and omens; and it may be noted that their superstition showed a singular mixture of Old World survivals and of practices borrowed from the savages or evolved by the very force of their strange surroundings. At the bottom they were deeply religious in their tendencies; and although ministers and meeting-houses were rare, yet the backwoods cabins often contained Bibles, and the mothers used to instil into the minds of their children reverence for Sunday,[3] while many even of the hunters refused to hunt on that day.[4]

[1] The regulators of backwoods society corresponded exactly to the vigilantes of the Western border to-day. In many of the cases of lynch-law which have come to my knowledge the effect has been healthy for the community; but sometimes great injustice is done. Generally, the vigilantes, by a series of summary executions, do really good work; but I have rarely known them fail, among the men whom they killed for good reason, to also kill one or two either by mistake or to gratify private malice.

[2] See Doddridge. [3] McAfee MSS. [4] Doddridge.

Those of them who knew the right honestly tried to live up to it, in spite of the manifold temptations to backsliding offered by their lives of hard and fierce contention.[1] But Calvinism, though more congenial to them than Episcopacy, and infinitely more so than Catholicism, was too cold for the fiery hearts of the borderers; they were not stirred to the depths of their natures till other creeds, and, above all, Methodism, worked their way into the wilderness.

Thus the backwoodsmen lived on the clearings they had hewed out of the everlasting forest; a grim, stern people, strong and simple, powerful for good and evil, swayed by gusts of stormy passion, the love of freedom rooted in their very hearts' core. Their lives were harsh and narrow, they gained their bread by their blood and sweat, in the unending struggle with the wild ruggedness of nature. They suffered terrible injuries at the hands of the red men, and on their foes they waged a terrible warfare in return. They were relentless, revengeful, suspicious, knowing neither ruth nor pity; they were also upright, resolute, and fearless, loyal to their friends, and devoted to their country. In spite of their many failings, they were of all men the best fitted to conquer the wilderness and hold it against all comers.

NOTE

In Mr. Shaler's entertaining "History of Kentucky" there is an account of the population of the Western frontiers and Kentucky, interesting because it illustrates some of the popular delusions on the subject. He speaks (pp. 9, 11, 23) of Kentucky as containing "nearly pure English blood, mainly

[1] Said one old Indian fighter, a Colonel Joseph Brown, of Tennessee, with quaint truthfulness: "I have tried also to be a religious man, but have not always, in a life of so much adventure and strife, been able to act consistently."—*Southwestern Monthly*, Nashville, 1851, I, 80.

derived through the old Dominion, and altogether from districts that shared the Virginian conditions." As much of the blood was Pennsylvanian or North Carolinian, his last sentence means nothing, unless all the "districts" outside of New England are held to have shared the Virginian conditions. Turning to Marshall (I, 441) we see that in 1780 about half the people were from Virginia, Pennsylvania furnishing the next greatest number; and of the Virginians most were from a population much more like that of Pennsylvania than like that of "tide-water" Virginia; as we learn from twenty sources, such as Waddell's "Annals of Augusta County." Mr. Shaler speaks of the Huguenots and of the Scotch immigrants, who came over after 1745; but actually makes no mention of the Presbyterian Irish or Scotch-Irish, much the most important element in all the West; in fact, on p. 10, he impliedly excludes any such immigration at all. He greatly underestimates the German element, which was important in West Virginia. He sums up by stating that the Kentuckians come from the "truly British people," quite a different thing from his statement that they are "English."

The "truly British people" consists of a conglomerate of as distinct races as exist anywhere in Aryan Europe. The Erse, Welsh, and Gaelic immigrants to America are just as distinct from the English, just as "foreign" to them, as are the Scandinavians, Germans, Hollanders, and Huguenots—often more so. Such early families as the Welsh Shelbys, and Gaelic McAfees are no more English than are the Huguenot Seviers or the German Stoners. Even including merely the immigrants from the British Isles, the very fact that the Welsh, Irish, and Scotch, in a few generations, fuse with the English instead of each element remaining separate, makes the American population widely different from that of Britain; exactly as a flask of water is different from two cans of hydrogen and oxygen gas. Mr. Shaler also seems inclined to look down a little on the Tennesseeans, and to consider their population as composed in part of inferior elements; but in reality, though there are very marked differences between the two commonwealths of Kentucky and Tennessee, yet they resemble one another more closely, in blood and

manners, than either does any other American State; and both have too just cause for pride to make it necessary for either to sneer at the other, or, indeed, at any State of our mighty Federal Union. In their origin they were precisely alike; but whereas the original pioneers, the hunters and Indian fighters, kept possession of Tennessee as long as they lived—Jackson, at Sevier's death, taking the latter's place with even more than his power—in Kentucky, on the other hand, after twenty years' rule, the first settlers were swamped by the great inrush of immigration, and with the defeat of Logan for governor the control passed into the hands of the same class of men that then ruled Virginia. After that date the "tide-water" stock assumed an importance in Kentucky it never had in Tennessee; and, of course, the influence of the Scotch-Irish blood was greatly diminished.

Mr. Shaler's error is trivial compared to that made by another and even more brilliant writer. In the "History of the People of the United States," by Professor McMaster (New York, 1887), p. 70, there is a mistake so glaring that it would not need notice, were it not for the many excellences and wide repute of Professor McMaster's book. He says that of the immigrants to Kentucky, most had come "from the neighboring States of Carolina and Georgia," and shows that this is not a mere slip of the pen, by elaborating the statement in the following paragraphs, again speaking of North and South Carolina and Georgia as furnishing the colonists to Kentucky. This shows a complete misapprehension not only of the feeding-grounds of the Western emigration, but of the routes it followed, and of the conditions of the Southern States. South Carolina furnished very few emigrants to Kentucky, and Georgia practically none; combined, they probably did not furnish as many as New Jersey or Maryland. Georgia was herself a frontier community; she received instead of sending out immigrants. The bulk of the South Carolina emigration went to Georgia.

CHAPTER VI

BOONE AND THE LONG HUNTERS; AND THEIR HUNTING IN NO-MAN'S LAND

1769–1774

The American backwoodsmen had surged up, wave upon wave, till their mass trembled in the troughs of the Alleghanies, ready to flood the continent beyond. The peoples threatened by them were dimly conscious of the danger which as yet only loomed in the distance. Far off, among their quiet adobe villages, in the sun-scorched lands by the Rio Grande, the slow Indo-Iberian peons and their monkish masters still walked in the tranquil steps of their fathers, ignorant of the growth of the power that was to overwhelm their children and successors; but nearer by, Spaniard and creole Frenchman, Algonquin, and Appalachians were all uneasy as they began to feel the first faint pressure of the American advance.

As yet they had been shielded by the forest which lay over the land like an unrent mantle. All through the mountains, and far beyond, it stretched without a break; but toward the mouth of the Kentucky and Cumberland rivers the landscape became varied with open groves of woodland, with flower-strewn glades and great barrens or prairies of long grass. This region, one of the fairest in the world, was the debatable ground between the Northern and the Southern Indians. Neither dared dwell therein,[1] but both used it as their hunting-

[1] This is true as a whole; but along the Mississippi, in the extreme west of the present Kentucky and Tennessee, the Chickasaws held possession. There was a Shawnee town south of the Ohio, and Cherokee villages in southeastern Tennessee.

grounds; and it was traversed from end to end by the well-marked war traces[1] which they followed when they invaded each other's territory. The whites, on trying to break through the barrier which hemmed them in from the Western lands, naturally succeeded best when pressing along the line of least resistance; and so their first great advance was made in this debatable land, where the uncertainly defined hunting-grounds of the Cherokee, Creek, and Chickasaw marched upon those of Northern Algonquin and Wyandot.

Unknown and unnamed hunters and Indian traders had from time to time pushed some little way into the wilderness; and they had been followed by others of whom we do indeed know the names, but little more. One explorer had found and named the Cumberland river and mountains, and the great pass called Cumberland Gap.[2] Others had gone far beyond the utmost limits this man had reached, and had hunted in the great bend of the Cumberland and in the woodland region of Kentucky, famed amongst the Indians for the abundance of the game.[3] But their accounts excited

[1] The backwoodsmen generally used "trace," where Western frontiersmen would now say "trail."

[2] Dr. Thomas Walker, of Virginia. He named them after the Duke of Cumberland. Walker was a genuine explorer and surveyor, a man of mark as a pioneer. The journal of his trip across the Cumberland to the headwaters of the Kentucky in 1750 has been preserved, and has just been published by William Cabell Rives (Boston: Little, Brown & Co.). It is very interesting, and Mr. Rives has done a real service in publishing it. Walker and five companions were absent six months. He found traces of earlier wanderers—probably hunters. One of his companions was bitten by a bear; three of the dogs were wounded by bears, and one killed by an elk; the horses were frequently bitten by rattlesnakes; once a bull buffalo threatened the whole party. They killed 13 buffaloes, 8 elks, 53 bears, 20 deer, 150 turkeys, and some other game.

[3] Hunters and Indian traders visited portions of Kentucky and Tennessee years before the country became generally known even on the border. (Not to speak of the French, who had long known something of the country, where they had even made trading-posts and built furnaces, as see Haywood, etc.) We know the names of a few. Those who went down the Ohio, merely landing on the Kentucky shore, do not deserve mention; the French had done as much for a century. Whites who

no more than a passing interest; they came and went without comment, as lonely stragglers had come and gone for nearly a century. The backwoods civilization crept slowly westward without being influenced in its movements by their explorations.[1]

Finally, however, among these hunters one arose whose wanderings were to bear fruit, who was destined to lead through the wilderness the first body of settlers that ever established a community in the far West, completely cut off from the seaboard colonies. This was Daniel Boone. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1734,[2] but when only a boy had been brought with the rest of his family to the banks of the Yadkin in North Carolina. Here he grew up, and as soon as he came of

had been captured by the Indians were sometimes taken through Tennessee or Kentucky, as John Salling in 1730, and Mrs. Mary Inglis in 1756 (see "Trans-Alleghany Pioneers," Collins, etc.). In 1654, a certain Colonel Wood was in Kentucky. The next real explorer was nearly a century later, though Doherty in 1690, and Adair in 1730, traded with the Cherokees in what is now Tennessee. Walker struck the headwaters of the Kentucky in 1750; he had been to the Cumberland in 1748. He made other exploring trips. Christopher Gist went up the Kentucky in 1751. In 1756 and 1758, Forts Loudon and Chissel were built on the Tennessee headwaters, but were soon after destroyed by the Cherokees. In 1761, '62, '63, and for a year or two afterward, a party of hunters, under the lead of one Wallen, hunted on the Western waters, going continually farther west. In 1765, Croghan made a sketch of the Ohio River. In 1766, James Smith and others explored Tennessee. Stoner, Harrod, and Lindsay, and a party from South Carolina were near the present site of Nashville in 1767; in the same year John Finley and others were in Kentucky; and it was Finley who first told Boone about it and led him thither.

[1] The attempt to find out the names of the men who first saw the different portions of the Western country is not very profitable. The first visitors were hunters, simply wandering in search of game, not with any settled purpose of exploration. Who the individual first comers were has generally been forgotten. At the most it is only possible to find out the name of some one of several who went to a given locality. The hunters were wandering everywhere. By chance, some went to places we now consider important. By chance, the names of a few of these have been preserved. But the credit belongs to the whole backwoods race, not to the individual backwoodsman.

[2] August 22, 1734 (according to James Parton, in his sketch of Boone). His grandfather was an English immigrant; his father had married a Quakeress. When he lived on the banks of the Delaware, the country was still a wilderness. He was born in Berks Co.

age he married, built a log hut, and made a clearing, whereon to farm like the rest of his backwoods neighbors. They all tilled their own clearings, guiding the plough among the charred stumps left when the trees were chopped down and the land burned over, and they were all, as a matter of course, hunters. With Boone, hunting and exploration were passions, and the lonely life of the wilderness, with its bold, wild freedom, the only existence for which he really cared. He was a tall, spare, sinewy man, with eyes like an eagle's, and muscles that never tired; the toil and hardship of his life made no impress on his iron frame, unhurt by intemperance of any kind, and he lived for eighty-six years, a backwoods hunter to the end of his days. His thoughtful, quiet, pleasant face, so often portrayed, is familiar to every one; it was the face of a man who never blustered nor bullied, who would neither inflict nor suffer any wrong, and who had a limitless fund of fortitude, endurance, and indomitable resolution upon which to draw when fortune proved adverse. His self-command and patience, his daring, restless love of adventure, and, in time of danger, his absolute trust in his own powers and resources, all combined to render him peculiarly fitted to follow the career of which he was so fond.

Boone hunted on the Western waters at an early date. In the valley of Boone's Creek, a tributary of the Watauga, there is a beech-tree still standing, on which can be faintly traced an inscription setting forth that "D. Boon cilled a bar on [this] tree in the year 1760."[1] On

[1] The inscription is first mentioned by Ramsey, p. 67. A letter from the Hon. John Allison, at present (1888) Secretary of State for Tennessee, goes to prove that the inscription has been on the tree as long as the district has been settled. Of course, it cannot be proved that the inscription is by Boone; but there is much reason for supposing that such is the case, and little for doubting it.

the expeditions of which this is the earliest record he was partly hunting on his own account, and partly exploring on behalf of another, Richard Henderson. Henderson was a prominent citizen of North Carolina,[1] a speculative man of great ambition and energy. He stood high in the colony, was extravagant and fond of display, and his fortune being jeopardized, he hoped to more than retrieve it by going into speculation in Western lands on an unheard-of scale; for he intended to try to establish on his own account a great proprietary colony beyond the mountains. He had great confidence in Boone; and it was his backing which enabled the latter to turn his discoveries to such good account.

Boone's claim to distinction rests not so much on his wide wanderings in unknown lands, for in this respect he did little more than was done by a hundred other backwoods hunters of his generation, but on the fact that he was able to turn his daring woodcraft to the advantage of his fellows. As he himself said, he was an instrument "ordained of God to settle the wilderness." He inspired confidence in all who met him,[2] so that the men of means and influence were willing to trust adventurous enterprises to his care; and his success as an explorer, his skill as a hunter, and his prowess as an Indian fighter, enabled him to bring these enterprises to a successful conclusion, and in some degree to control the wild spirits associated with him.

Boone's expeditions into the edges of the wilderness whetted his appetite for the unknown. He had heard of great hunting-grounds in the far interior from a stray

[1] He was by birth a Virginian, of mixed Scotch and Welsh descent. See Collins, II, 336; also Ramsey. For Boone's early connection with Henderson, in 1764, see Haywood, 35.

[2] Even among his foes; he is almost the only American praised by Lt.-Gov. Henry Hamilton of Detroit, for instance (see *Royal Gazette*, July 15, 1780).

hunter and Indian trader,[1] who had himself seen them, and on May 1, 1769, he left his home on the Yadkin "to wander through the wilderness of America in quest of the country of Kentucky."[2] He was accompanied by five other men, including his informant, and struck out toward the Northwest, through the tangled mass of rugged mountains and gloomy forests. During five weeks of severe toil the little band journeyed through vast solitudes, whose utter loneliness can with difficulty be understood by those who have not themselves dwelt and hunted in primeval mountain forests. Then, early in June, the adventurers broke through the interminable wastes of dim woodland, and stood on the threshold of the beautiful blue-grass region of Kentucky; a land of running waters, of groves and glades, of prairies, cane-brakes, and stretches of lofty forest. It was teeming with game. The shaggy-maned herds of unwieldy buffalo—the bison, as they should be called—had beaten out broad roads through the forests, and had furrowed the prairies with trails along which they had travelled for countless generations. The round-horned elk, with spreading, massive antlers, the lordliest of the deer tribe throughout the world, abounded, and like the buffalo travelled in bands not only through the woods but also across the reaches of waving grass-land. The deer were extraordinarily numerous, and so were bears, while wolves and panthers were plentiful. Wherever there was a salt-spring the country was fairly thronged with

[1] John Finley.

[2] "The Adventures of Colonel Daniel Boone, formerly a hunter"; nominally written by Boone himself, in 1784, but in reality by John Filson, the first Kentucky historian—a man who did history a good service, albeit a true sample of the small hedge-school pedant. The old pioneer's own language would have been far better than that which Filson used; for the latter's composition is a travesty of Johnsonese in its most aggravated form. For Filson see Durrett's admirable "Life" in the Filson Club Publications.

wild beasts of many kinds. For six months Boone and his companions enjoyed such hunting as had hardly fallen to men of their race since the Germans came out of the Hercynian forest.[1]

In December, however, they were attacked by Indians. Boone and a companion were captured; and when they escaped they found their camp broken up, and the rest of the party scattered and gone home. About this time they were joined by Squire Boone, the brother of the great hunter, and himself a woodsman of but little less skill, together with another adventurer; the two had travelled through the immense wilderness, partly to explore it and partly with the hope of finding the original adventurers, which they finally succeeded in doing more by good luck than design. Soon afterward Boone's companion in his first short captivity was again surprised by the Indians, and this time was slain[2]—the first of the thousands of human beings with whose life-blood Kentucky was bought. The attack was entirely unprovoked. The Indians had wantonly shed the first blood. The land belonged to no one tribe, but was hunted over by all, each feeling jealous of every other intruder; they attacked the whites, not because the

[1] The "Nieblung Lied" tells of Siegfried's feats with bear, buffalo, elk, wolf, and deer:

> "Danach schlug er wieder einen Büffel und einen Elk
> Vier starkes Auer nieder und einen grimmen Schelk,
> So schnell trug ihn die Mähre, dasz ihm nichts entsprang;
> Hinden und Hirsche wurden viele sein Fang.
> . . . . . ein Waldthier fürchterlich,
> Einen wilden Bären."

Siegfried's elk was our moose; and, like the American frontiersmen of to-day, the old German singer calls the Wisent or bison a buffalo—European sportsmen now committing an equally bad blunder by giving it the name of the extinct aurochs. Be it observed also that the hard-fighting, hard-drinking, boastful hero of Nieblung fame used a "spür hund" just as his representative of Kentucky or Tennessee used a track-hound a thousand years later.

[2] His name was John Stewart.

whites had wronged them, but because their invariable policy was to kill any strangers on any grounds over which they themselves ever hunted, no matter what man had the best right thereto. The Kentucky hunters were promptly taught that in this No-man's land, teeming with game and lacking even a solitary human habitation, every Indian must be regarded as a foe.

The man who had accompanied Squire Boone was terrified by the presence of the Indians, and now returned to the settlements. The two brothers remained alone on their hunting-grounds throughout the winter, living in a little cabin. About the 1st of May Squire set off alone to the settlements to procure horses and ammunition. For three months Daniel Boone remained absolutely alone in the wilderness, without salt, sugar, or flour, and without the companionship of so much as a horse or a dog.[1] But the solitude-loving hunter, dauntless and self-reliant, enjoyed to the full his wild, lonely life; he passed his days hunting and exploring, wandering hither and thither over the country, while at night he lay off in the cane-brake or thickets, without a fire, so as not to attract the Indians. Of the latter he saw many signs, and they sometimes came into his camp, but his sleepless wariness enabled him to avoid capture.

Late in July, his brother returned, and met him according to appointment at the old camp. Other hunters

[1] His remaining absolutely alone in the wilderness for such a length of time is often spoken of with wonder; but here again Boone stands merely as the backwoods type, not as an exception. To this day many hunters in the Rockies do the same. In 1880, two men whom I knew wintered to the west of the Bighorns, 150 miles from any human beings. They had salt and flour, however; but they were nine months without seeing a white face. They killed elk, buffalo, and a moose; and had a narrow escape from a small Indian war-party. Last winter (1887–88) an old trapper, a friend of mine in the days when he hunted buffalo, spent five months entirely alone in the mountains north of the Flathead country.

also now came into the Kentucky wilderness, and Boone joined a small party of them for a short time. Such a party of hunters is always glad to have anything wherewith to break the irksome monotony of the long evenings passed round the camp-fire; and a book or a greasy pack of cards was as welcome in a camp of Kentucky riflemen in 1770 as it is to a party of Rocky Mountain hunters in 1888. Boone has recorded in his own quaint phraseology an incident of his life during this summer, which shows how eagerly such a little band of frontiersmen read a book, and how real its characters became to their minds. He was encamped with five other men on Red River, and they had with them for their "amusement the history of Samuel Gulliver's travels, wherein he gave an account of his young master, Glundelick, careing [sic] him on a market day for a show to a town called Lulbegrud." In the party who, amid such strange surroundings, read and listened to Dean Swift's writings was a young man named Alexander Neely. One night he came into camp with two Indian scalps, taken from a Shawnese village he had found on a creek running into the river; and he announced to the circle of grim wilderness veterans that "he had been that day to Lulbegrud, and had killed two Brobdignags in their capital." To this day the creek by which the two luckless Shawnees lost their lives is known as Lulbegrud Creek.[1]

Soon after this encounter the increasing danger from the Indians drove Boone back to the valley of the Cum-

[1] Deposition of Daniel Boone, September 15, 1796. Certified copy from Deposition Book No. 1, page 156, Clark County Court, Ky. First published by Colonel John Mason Brown, in "Battle of the Blue Licks," p. 40 (Frankfort, 1882). The book which these old hunters read around their camp-fire in the Indian-haunted primeval forest a century and a quarter ago has by great good luck been preserved, and is in Colonel Durrett's library at Louisville. It is entitled the "Works of Dr.

berland River, and, in the spring of 1771, he returned to his home on the Yadkin.

A couple of years before Boone went to Kentucky, Steiner, or Stoner, and Harrod, two hunters from Pittsburg, who had passed through the Illinois, came down to hunt in the bend of the Cumberland, where Nashville now stands; they found vast numbers of buffalo, and killed a great many, especially around the licks, where the huge clumsy beasts had fairly destroyed most of the forest, treading down the young trees and bushes till the ground was left bare or covered with a rich growth of clover. The bottoms and the hollows between the hills were thickset with cane. Sycamore grew in the low ground, and toward the Mississippi were to be found the persimmon and cottonwood. Sometimes the forest was open and composed of huge trees; elsewhere it was of thicker, smaller growth.[1] Everywhere game abounded, and it was nowhere very wary.

Other hunters, of whom we know even the names of only a few, had been through many parts of the wilderness before Boone, and earlier still Frenchmen had built forts and smelting-furnaces on the Cumberland, the Tennessee,[2] and the head tributaries of the Kentucky.

Jonathan Swift, London, MDCCLXV," and is in two small volumes. On the title-page is written "A. Neelly, 1770."

Frontiersmen are often content with the merest printed trash; but the better men among them appreciate really good literature quite as much as any other class of people. In the long winter evenings they study to good purpose books as varied as Dante, Josephus, Macaulay, Longfellow, Parton's "Life of Jackson," and the Rollo stories—to mention only volumes that have been especial favorites with my own cowboys and hunters.

[1] MS. diary of Benjamin Hawkins, 1796. Preserved in Nashville Historical Society. In 1796, buffalo were scarce; but some fresh signs of them were still seen at licks.

[2] Haywood, p. 75, etc. It is a waste of time to quarrel over who first discovered a particular tract of this wilderness. A great many hunters traversed different parts at different times, from 1760 on, each practically exploring on his own ac-

Boone is interesting as a leader and explorer; but he is still more interesting as a type. The West was neither discovered, won, nor settled by any single man. No keen-eyed statesman planned the movement, nor was it carried out by any great military leader; it was the work of a whole people, of whom each man was impelled mainly by sheer love of adventure; it was the outcome of the ceaseless strivings of all the dauntless, restless backwoods folk to win homes for their descendants and to each penetrate deeper than his neighbors into the remote forest hunting-grounds where the perilous pleasures of the chase and of war could be best enjoyed. We owe the conquest of the West to all the backwoodsmen, not to any solitary individual among them; where all alike were strong and daring there was no chance for any single man to rise to unquestioned pre-eminence.

In the summer of 1769 a large band of hunters[1] crossed the mountains to make a long hunt in the Western wilderness, the men clad in hunting-shirts, moccasins, and leggings, with traps, rifles, and dogs, and each bringing with him two or three horses. They made their way over the mountains, forded or swam the rapid, timber-choked streams, and went down the Cumberland, till at last they broke out of the forest and came upon great barrens of tall grass. One of their number was killed by a small party of Indians; but they saw no signs of human habitations. Yet they came across mounds and graves and other remains of an ancient people who had once lived in the land, but had died out

count. We do not know the names of most of them; those we do know are only worth preserving in county histories and the like; the credit belongs to the race, not the individual.

[1] From twenty to forty. Compare Haywood and Marshall, both of whom are speaking of the same bodies of men; Ramsey makes the mistake of supposing they are speaking of different parties; Haywood dwells on the feats of those who descended the Cumberland; Marshall of those who went to Kentucky.

of it long ages before the incoming of the white men.[1]

The hunters made a permanent camp in one place, and returned to it at intervals to deposit their skins and peltries. Between times they scattered out singly or in small bands. They hunted all through the year, killing vast quantities of every kind of game. Most of it they got by fair still-hunting, but some by methods we do not now consider legitimate, such as calling up a doe by imitating the bleat of a fawn, and shooting deer from a scaffold when they came to the salt-licks at night. Nevertheless, most of the hunters did not approve of "crusting" the game—that is, of running it down on snow-shoes in the deep midwinter snows.

At the end of the year some of the adventurers returned home; others went north into the Kentucky country,[2] where they hunted for several months before recrossing the mountains; while the remainder, led by an old hunter named Kasper Mansker,[3] built two boats and hollowed out of logs two pirogues or dugouts—clumsier but tougher craft than the light birch-bark canoes—and started down the Cumberland. At the French Lick, where Nashville now stands, they saw enormous quantities of buffalo, elk, and other game, more than they had ever seen before in any one place. Some of their goods were taken by a party of Indians they met, but some French traders whom they likewise encountered, treated them well and gave them salt, flour, tobacco, and taffia, the last being especially prized, as they had had no spirits for a year. They went down to Natchez, sold their furs, hides, oil, and tallow, and

[1] The so-called mound-builders; now generally considered to have been simply the ancestors of the present Indian races.

[2] Led by one James Knox.

[3] His real name was Kasper Mansker, as his signature shows, but he was always spoken of as Mansco.

some returned by sea while others, including Mansker, came overland with a drove of horses that was being taken through the Indian nations to Georgia. From the length of time all these men, as well as Boone and his companions, were absent, they were known as the Long Hunters,[1] and the fame of their hunting and exploring spread all along the border and greatly excited the young men.

In 1771, many hunters crossed over the mountains and penetrated far into the wilderness, to work huge havoc among the herds of game. Some of them came in bands, and others singly, and many of the mountains, lakes, rivers, and creeks of Tennessee are either called after the leaders among these old hunters and wanderers, or else by their names perpetuate the memory of some incident of their hunting trips.[2]

Mansker himself came back, a leader among his comrades, and hunted many years in the woods alone or with others of his kind, and saw and did many strange things. One winter he and those who were with him built a skin-house from the hides of game, and when their ammunition gave out they left three of their number and all their dogs at the skin-house and went to the settlements for powder and lead. When they returned they found that two of the men had been killed and the other chased away by the Indians, who, however, had not found the camp. The dogs, having seen no human face for three months, were very wild, yet in a few days became as tame and well-trained as ever. They killed such enormous quantities of buffalo, elk, and especially deer, that they could not pack the hides into camp, and

[1] McAfee MSS. ("Autobiography of Robert McAfee"). Sometimes the term "Long Hunters" was used as including Boone, Finley, and their companions, sometimes not; in the McAfee MSS. it is explicitly used in the former sense.

[2] See Haywood for Clinch River, Drake's Pond, Mansco's Lick, Greasy Rock, etc.

one of the party, during an idle moment and in a spirit of protest against fate,[1] carved on the peeled trunk of a fallen poplar, where it long remained, the sentence: "2300 deer skins lost; ruination by God!" The soul of this thrifty hunter must have been further grieved when a party of Cherokees visited their camp and took away all the camp utensils and five hundred hides. The whites found the broad track they made in coming in, but could not find where they had gone out, each wily redskin then covering his own trail, and the whole number apparently breaking up into several parties.

Sometimes the Indians not only plundered the hunting-camps but killed the hunters as well, and the hunters retaliated in kind. Often the white men and red fought one another whenever they met, and displayed in their conflicts all the cunning and merciless ferocity that made forest warfare so dreadful. Terrible deeds of prowess were done by the mighty men on either side. It was a war of stealth and cruelty, and ceaseless, sleepless watchfulness. The contestants had sinewy frames and iron wills, keen eyes and steady hands, hearts as bold as they were ruthless. Their moccasined feet made no sound as they stole softly on the camp of a sleeping enemy or crept to ambush him while he himself still-hunted or waylaid the deer. A favorite stratagem was to imitate the call of game, especially the gobble of the wild turkey, and thus to lure the would-be hunter to his fate. If the deceit was guessed at, the caller was himself stalked. The men grew wonderfully expert in detecting imitation. One old hunter, Castleman by name, was in after-years fond of describing how an Indian nearly lured him to his death. It was in the dusk of the evening, when he heard the cries of two great

[1] A hunter named Bledsoe. Collins, II, 418.

wood-owls near him. Listening attentively, he became convinced that all was not right. "The woo-woo call and the woo-woo answer were not well timed and toned, and the babel-chatter was a failure. More than this, they seemed to be on the ground." Creeping cautiously up, and peering through the brush, he saw something the height of a stump between two forked trees. It did not look natural; he aimed, pulled trigger, and killed an Indian.

Each party of Indians or whites was ever on the watch to guard against danger or to get the chance of taking vengeance for former wrongs. The dark woods saw a myriad lonely fights where red warrior or white hunter fell and no friend of the fallen ever knew his fate, where his sole memorial was the scalp that hung in the smoky cabin or squalid wigwam of the victor.

The rude and fragmentary annals of the frontier are filled with the deeds of men, of whom Mansker can be taken as a type. He was a wonderful marksman and woodsman, and was afterward made a colonel of the frontier militia, though, being of German descent, he spoke only broken English.[1] Like most of the hunters he became specially proud of his rifle, calling it "Nancy"; for they were very apt to know each his favorite weapon by some homely or endearing nickname. Every forest sight or sound was familiar to him. He knew the cries of the birds and beasts so well that no imitation could deceive him. Once he was nearly taken in by an unusually perfect imitation of a wild gobbler; but he finally became suspicious, and "placed" his adversary behind a large tree. Having perfect confidence in his rifle, and knowing that the Indians rarely fired except at close range—partly because they were

[1] Carr's "Early Times in Middle Tennessee," pp. 52, 54, 56, etc.

poor shots, partly because they loaded their guns too lightly—he made no attempt to hide. Feigning to pass to the Indian's right, the latter, as he expected, tried to follow him; reaching an opening in a glade, Mansker suddenly wheeled and killed his foe. When hunting he made his home sometimes in a hollow tree, sometimes in a hut of buffalo-hides; for the buffalo were so plenty that once when a lick was discovered by himself and a companion,[1] the latter, though on horseback, was nearly trampled to death by the mad rush of a herd they surprised and stampeded.

He was a famous Indian fighter; one of the earliest of his recorded deeds has to do with an Indian adventure. He and three other men were trapping on Sulphur Fork and Red River, in the great bend of the Cumberland. Moving their camp, they came on recent traces of Indians: deer carcasses and wicker frames for stretching hides. They feared to tarry longer unless they knew something of their foes, and Mansker set forth to explore, and turned toward Red River, where, from the sign, he thought to find the camp. Travelling some twenty miles, he perceived by the sycamore-trees in view that he was near the river. Advancing a few steps farther he suddenly found himself within eighty or ninety yards of the camp. He instantly slipped behind a tree to watch. There were only two Indians in camp; the rest he supposed were hunting at a distance. Just as he was about to retire, one of the Indians took up a tomahawk and strolled off in the opposite direction; while the other picked up his gun, put it on his shoulder, and walked directly toward Mansker's hiding-place. Mansker lay close, hoping that he would not be noticed; but the Indian advanced directly toward him until not fif-

[1] The hunter Bledsoe mentioned in a previous note.

teen paces off. There being no alternative, Mansker cocked his piece, and shot the Indian through the body. The Indian screamed, threw down his gun, and ran toward camp; passing it he pitched headlong down the bluff, dead, into the river. The other likewise ran to camp at the sound of the shot; but Mansker outran him, reached the camp first, and picked up an old gun that was on the ground; but the gun would not go off, and the Indian turned and escaped. Mansker broke the old gun, and returned speedily to his comrades. The next day they all went to the spot, where they found the dead Indian and took away his tomahawk, knife, and bullet bag; but they never found his gun. The other Indian had come back, had loaded his horses with furs, and was gone. They followed him all that day and all night with a torch of dry cane, and could never overtake him. Finding that there were other bands of Indians about, they then left their hunting-grounds. Toward the close of his life old Mansker, like many another fearless and ignorant backwoods fighter, became so much impressed by the fiery earnestness and zeal of the Methodists that he joined himself to them, and became a strong and helpful prop of the community whose first foundations he had helped to lay.

Sometimes the hunters met creole trappers, who sent their tallow, hides, and furs in pirogues and bateaux down the Mississippi to Natchez or Orleans, instead of having to transport them on pack-horses through the perilous forest tracks across the mountains. They had to encounter dangers from beasts as well as men. More than once we hear of one who, in a cane-brake or tangled thicket, was mangled to death by the horns and hoofs of a wounded buffalo.[1] All of the wild beasts were then

[1] As Haywood, 81.

comparatively unused to contact with rifle-bearing hunters; they were, in consequence, much more ferocious and ready to attack man than at present. The bear were the most numerous of all, after the deer; their chase was a favorite sport. There was just enough danger in it to make it exciting, for though hunters were frequently bitten or clawed, they were hardly ever killed. The wolves were generally very wary; yet in rare instances they, too, were dangerous. The panther was a much more dreaded foe, and lives were sometimes lost in hunting him; but even with the panther, the cases where the hunter was killed were very exceptional.

The hunters were in their lives sometimes clean and straight, and sometimes immoral, with a gross and uncouth viciousness. We read of one party of six men and a woman, who were encountered on the Cumberland River; the woman acted as the wife of a man named Big John, but deserted him for one of his companions, and when he fell sick persuaded the whole party to leave him in the wilderness to die of disease and starvation. Yet those who left him did not in the end fare better, for they were ambushed and cut off, when they had gone down to Natchez, apparently by Indians.

At first the hunters, with their small-bore rifles, were unsuccessful in killing buffalo. Once, when George Rogers Clark had long resided in Kentucky, he and two companions discovered a camp of some forty newcomers actually starving, though buffalo were plenty. Clark and his friends speedily relieved their necessities by killing fourteen of the great beasts; for when once the hunters had found out the knack, the buffalo were easier slaughtered than any other game.[1]

[1] This continued to be the case until the buffalo were all destroyed. When my cattle came to the Little Missouri in 1882, buffalo were plenty; my men killed nearly

The hunters were the pioneers; but close behind them came another set of explorers quite as hardy and resolute. These were the surveyors. The men of chain and compass played a part in the exploration of the West scarcely inferior to that of the heroes of axe and rifle. Often, indeed, the parts were combined; Boone himself was a surveyor.[1] Vast tracts of Western land were continually being allotted either to actual settlers or as bounties to soldiers who had served against the French and Indians. These had to be explored and mapped, and as there was much risk as well as reward in the task it naturally proved attractive to all adventurous young men who had some education, a good deal of ambition, and not too much fortune. A great number of young men of good families, like Washington and Clark, went into the business. Soon after the return of Boone and the Long Hunters, parties of surveyors came down the Ohio,[2] mapping out its course and exploring the Kentucky lands that lay beside it.[3]

Among the hunters, surveyors, and explorers who came into the wilderness in 1773 was a band led by three young men named McAfee—typical backwoodsmen, hardy, adventurous, their frontier recklessness and license tempered by the Calvinism they had learned in their rough log home. They were fond of hunting, but they came to spy out the land and see if it could be made into homes for their children; and in their party were

a hundred that winter, though tending the cattle; yet an inexperienced hunter not far from us, though a hardy plainsman, killed only three in the whole time. See also Parkman's "Oregon Trail" for an instance of a party of Missouri backwoodsmen who made a characteristic failure in an attempt on a buffalo band.

[1] See Note B.

[2] An English engineer made a rude survey or table of distances of the Ohio in 1766.

[3] Collins states that in 1770 and 1772 Washington surveyed small tracts in what is now northeastern Kentucky; but this is more than doubtful.

several surveyors. They descended the Ohio in dugout canoes, with their rifles, blankets, tomahawks, and fishing-tackle. They met some Shawnees and got on well with them; but while their leader was visiting the chief, Cornstalk, and listening to his fair speeches at his town of old Chillicothe, the rest of the party were startled to see a band of young Shawnee braves returning from a successful foray on the settlements, driving before them the laden pack-horses they had stolen.[1]

They explored part of Kentucky, and visited the different licks. One, long named Big Bone Lick, was famous because there were scattered about it in incredible quantity the gigantic remains of the extinct mastodon; the McAfees made a tent by stretching their blankets over the huge fossil ribs, and used the disjointed vertebræ as stools on which to sit. Game of many kinds thronged the spaces round the licks; herds of buffalo, elk, and deer, as well as bears and wolves, were all in sight at once. The ground roundabout some of them was trodden down so that there was not as much grass left as would feed a sheep; and the game trails were like streets, or the beaten roads round a city. A little village to this day recalls by its name the fact that it stands on a former "stamping-ground" of the buffalo. At one lick the explorers met with what might have proved a serious adventure. One of the McAfees and a companion were passing round its outskirts, when some others of the party fired at a gang of buffaloes, which stampeded directly toward the two. While his companion scampered up a leaning mulberry-bush, McAfee, less agile, leaped behind a tree trunk, where he stood sideways till the buffalo passed, their horns scraping off the bark on either side; then he looked

[1] All of this is taken from the McAfee MSS., in Colonel Durrett's library.

round to see his friend "hanging in the mulberry-bush like a coon." [1]

When the party left this lick they followed a buffalo trail, beaten out in the forest, "the size of the wagon road leading out of Williamsburg," then the capital of Virginia. It crossed the Kentucky River at a riffle below where Frankfort now stands. Thence they started homeward across the Cumberland Mountains, and suffered terribly while making their way through the "desolate and voiceless solitudes"; mere wastes of cliffs, crags, caverns, and steep hillsides covered with pine, laurel, and underbrush. Twice they were literally starving and were saved in the nick of time by the killing, on the first occasion, of a big bull elk—on the next, of a small spike-buck. At last, sun-scorched and rain-beaten, footsore and leg-weary, their thighs torn to pieces by the stout briars,[2] and their feet and hands blistered and scalded, they came out in Powell's Valley, and followed the well-worn hunter's trail across it. Thence it was easy to reach home, where the tale of their adventures excited still more the young frontiersmen.

Their troubles were ended for the time being; but in Powell's Valley they met other wanderers whose toil and peril had just begun. There they encountered the company[3] which Daniel Boone was just leading across the mountains, with the hope of making a permanent settlement in the far-distant Kentucky.[4] Boone had sold his farm on the Yadkin and all the goods he could not carry with him, and in September, 1773, he started

[1] McAfee MSS. A similar adventure befell my brother Elliott and my cousin John Roosevelt while they were hunting buffalo on the staked plains of Texas in 1877.

[2] They evidently wore breech-clouts and leggings, not trousers.

[3] McAfee MSS. [4] Filson's "Boone."

for Kentucky with his wife and his children; five families, and forty men besides, went with him, driving their horses and cattle. It was the first attempt that was made to settle a region separated by long stretches of wilderness from the already inhabited districts; and it was doomed to failure. On approaching the gloomy and forbidding defiles of the Cumberland Mountains the party was attacked by Indians.[1] Six of the men, including Boone's eldest son, were slain, and the cattle scattered; and though the backwoodsmen rallied and repulsed their assailants, yet they had suffered such loss and damage that they retreated and took up their abode temporarily on the Clinch River.

In the same year Simon Kenton, afterward famous as a scout and Indian fighter, in company with other hunters, wandered through Kentucky. Kenton, like every one else, was astounded at the beauty and fertility of the land and the innumerable herds of buffalo, elk, and other game that thronged the trampled ground around the licks. One of his companions was taken by the Indians, who burned him alive.

In the following year numerous parties of surveyors visited the land. One of these was headed by John Floyd, who was among the ablest of the Kentucky pioneers, and afterward played a prominent part in the young commonwealth, until his death at the hands of the savages. Floyd was at the time assistant surveyor of Fincastle County; and his party went out for the purpose of making surveys "by virtue of the Governor's warrant for officers and soldiers on the Ohio and its waters." [2]

[1] October 10, 1773, Filson's "Boone." The McAfee MSS. speak of meeting Boone in Powell's Valley and getting home in September; if so, it must have been the very end of the month.

[2] The account of this journey of Floyd and his companions is taken from a very

They started on April 9, 1774—eight men in all—from their homes in Fincastle County.[1] They went down the Kanawha in a canoe, shooting bear and deer, and catching great pike and catfish. The first survey they made was one of two thousand acres for "Colo. Washington"; and they made another for Patrick Henry. On the way they encountered other parties of surveyors, and learned that an Indian war was threatened; for a party of thirteen would-be settlers on the upper Ohio had been attacked, but had repelled their assailants, and in consequence the Shawnees had declared for war, and threatened thereafter to kill the Virginians and rob the Pennsylvanians wherever they found them.[2] The reason for this discrimination in favor of the citizens of the Quaker State was that the Virginians with whom the Indians came chiefly in contact were settlers, whereas the Pennsylvanians were traders. The marked difference in the way the savages looked at the two classes received additional emphasis in Lord Dunmore's war.

At the mouth of the Kanawha[3] the adventurers found twenty or thirty men gathered together; some had come to settle, but most wished to explore or survey the lands. All were in high spirits, and resolute to

interesting MS. journal, kept by one of the party—Thomas Hanson. It was furnished me, together with other valuable papers, through the courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Trigg, of Abingdon, Va., and of Dr. George Ben. Johnston, of Richmond, to whom I take this opportunity of returning my warm thanks.

[1] From the house of Colonel William Preston, "at one o'clock, in high spirits." They took the canoe at the mouth of Elk River, on the sixteenth. Most of the diary is, of course, taken up with notes on the character and fertility of the lands, and memoranda of the surveys made. Especial comment is made on a burning spring by the Kanawha, which is dubbed "one of the wonders of the world."

[2] They received this news on April 17th, and confirmation thereof on the 19th. The dates should be kept in mind, as they show that the Shawnees had begun hostilities from a fortnight to a month before Cresap's attack and the murder of Logan's family, which will be described hereafter.

[3] Which they reached on the twentieth.

go to Kentucky, in spite of Indian hostilities. Some of them joined Floyd, and raised his party to eighteen men, who started down the Ohio in four canoes.[1] They found "a battoe loaded with corn," apparently abandoned, and took about three bushels with them. Other parties joined them from time to time, as they paddled and drifted down the stream; and one or two of their own number, alarmed by further news of Indian hostilities, went back. Once they met a party of Delawares, by whom they were not molested; and again, two or three of their numbers encountered a couple of hostile savages; and though no one was hurt, the party was kept on the watch all the time. They marvelled much at the great trees—one sycamore was thirty-seven feet in circumference—and on a Sunday, which they kept as a day of rest, they examined with interest the forest-covered embankments of a fort at the mouth of the Scioto, a memorial of the mound-builders who had vanished centuries before.

When they reached the mouth of the Kentucky[2] they found two Delawares and a squaw, to whom they gave corn and salt. Here they split up, and Floyd and his original party spent a week in the neighborhood, surveying land, going some distance up the Kentucky to a salt-lick, where they saw a herd of three hundred buffalo.[3] They then again embarked, and drifted down the Ohio. On May 26th they met two Delawares in a canoe flying a red flag; they had been sent down the

[1] On the twenty-second.

[2] On May 13th.

[3] There were quarrels among the surveyors. The entry for May 13th runs: "Our company divided, eleven men went up to Harrad's company one hundred miles up the Cantucky or Louisa river (n. b. one Capt. Harrad has been there many months building a kind of Town &c) in order to make improvements. This day a quarrel arose between Mr. Lee and Mr. Hyte; Lee cut a Stick and gave Hyte a Whiping with it, upon which Mr. Floyd demanded the King's Peace which stopt it sooner than it would have ended if he had not been there."

river with a pass from the commandant at Fort Pitt to gather their hunters and get them home, in view of the threatened hostilities between the Shawnees and Virginians.[1] The actions of the two Indians were so suspicious, and the news they brought was so alarming, that some of Floyd's companions became greatly alarmed, and wished to go straight on down the Mississippi; but Floyd swore that he would finish his work unless actually forced off. Three days afterward they reached the falls.

Here Floyd spent a fortnight, making surveys in every direction, and then started off to explore the land between the Salt River and the Kentucky. Like the others, he carried his own pack, which consisted of little but his blanket and his instruments. He sometimes had difficulties with his men. One of them refused to carry the chain one day, and went off to hunt, got lost, and was not found for thirty-six hours. Another time it was noticed that two of the hunters had become sullen, and seemed anxious to leave camp. The following morning, while on the march, the party killed an elk and halted for breakfast; but the two hunters walked on, and, says the journal, "we never saw them more"; but whether they got back to the settlements or perished in the wilderness, none could tell.

The party suffered much hardship. Floyd fell sick, and for three days could not travel. They gave him an "Indian sweat," probably building just such a little sweat-house as the Indians use to this day. Others of their number at different times fell ill; and they were ever on the watch for Indians. In the vast forests, every

[1]They said that in a skirmish the whites had killed thirteen Shawnees, two Mingos, and one Delaware (this may or may not mean the massacres by Cresap and Greathouse, see, *post*, chapter on Lord Dunmore's War).

sign of a human being was the sign of a probable enemy. Once they heard a gun, and another time a sound as of a man calling to another; and on each occasion they redoubled their caution, keeping guard as they rested, and at night extinguishing their camp-fire and sleeping a mile or two from it.

They built a bark canoe in which to cross the Kentucky, and on the 1st of July they met another party of surveyors on the banks of that stream.[1] Two or three days afterward, Floyd and three companions left the others, agreeing to meet them on August 1st, at a cabin built by a man named Harwood, on the south side of the Kentucky, a few miles from the mouth of the Elkhorn. For three weeks they surveyed and hunted, enchanted with the beauty of the country.[2] They then went to the cabin, several days before the appointed time; but to their surprise found everything scattered over the ground, and two fires burning, while on a tree near the landing was written: "Alarmed by finding some people killed and we are gone down." This left the four adventurers in a bad plight, as they had but fifteen rounds of powder left, and none of them knew the way home. However, there was no help for it, and they started off.[3] When they came to the mountains they found it such hard going that they were obliged to throw away their blankets and everything else except their rifles, hunting-shirts, leggings, and moccasins. Like the other parties of returning explorers, they found this portion of their journey ex-

[1] Where the journal says the land "is like a paradise, it is so good and beautiful."

[2] The journal for July 8th says: "The Land is so good that I cannot give it its due Praise. The undergrowth is Clover, Pea-vine, Cane & Nettles; intermingled with Rich Weed. It's timber is Honey Locust, Black Walnut, Sugar Tree, Hickory, Iron-Wood, Hoop Wood, Mulberry, Ash and Elm and some Oak." And later it dwells on the high limestone cliffs facing the river on both sides.

[3] On July 25th.

tremely distressing; and they suffered much from sore feet, and also from want of food, until they came on a gang of buffaloes and killed two. At last they struck Cumberland Gap, followed a blazed trail across it to Powell's Valley, and on August 9th came to the outlying settlements on Clinch River, where they found the settlers all in their wooden forts, because of the war with the Shawnees.[1]

In this same year many different bodies of hunters and surveyors came into the country, drifting down the Ohio in pirogues. Some forty men, led by Harrod and Sowdowsky[2] founded Harrodsburg, where they built cabins and sowed corn but the Indians killed one of their number and the rest dispersed. Some returned across the mountains; but Sowdowsky and another went through the woods to the Cumberland River, where they built a canoe, paddled down the muddy Mississippi between unending reaches of lonely marsh and forest, and from New Orleans took ship to Virginia.

At that time, among other parties of surveyors there was one which had been sent by Lord Dunmore to the Falls of the Ohio. When the war broke out between

[1] I have given the account of Floyd's journey at some length as illustrating the experience of a typical party of surveyors. The journal has never hitherto been alluded to, and my getting hold of it was almost accidental.

There were three different kinds of explorers: Boone represents the hunters; the McAfees represent the would-be settlers; and Floyd's party the surveyors who mapped out the land for owners of land grants. In 1774, there were parties of each kind in Kentucky. Floyd's experience shows that these parties were continually meeting others and splitting up; he started out with eight men, at one time was in a body with thirty-seven, and returned home with four.

The journal is written in a singularly clear and legible hand, evidently by a man of good education.

[2] The latter, from his name presumably of Sclavonic ancestry, came originally from New York, always a centre of mixed nationalities. He founded a most respectable family, some of whom have changed their name to Sandusky; but there seems to be no justification for their claim that they gave Sandusky its name, for this is almost certainly a corruption of its old Algonquin title. "American Pioneer" (Cincinnati, 1843), II, p. 325.

the Shawnees and the Virginians, Lord Dunmore, being very anxious for the fate of these surveyors, sent Boone and Stoner to pilot them in; which the two bush veterans accordingly did, making the round trip of eight hundred miles in sixty-four days. The outbreak of the Indian war caused all the hunters and surveyors to leave Kentucky; and at the end of 1774 there were no whites left, either there or in what is now middle Tennessee. But on the frontier all men's eyes were turned toward these new and fertile regions. The pioneer work of the hunter was over, and that of the axe-bearing settler was about to begin.

NOTE A

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Nashville, Tenn., June 12, 1888.

HON. THEODORE ROOSEVELT,
Sagamore Hill, Long Island, N. Y.

DEAR SIR:

I was born, "raised," and have always lived in Washington County, E. Tenn. Was born on the "head-waters" of "Boone's Creek," in said county. I resided for several years in the "Boone's Creek Civil District," in Washington County (this some "twenty years ago"), within two miles of the historic tree in question, on which is carved, "D. Boon cilled a bar &c."; having visited and examined the tree more than once. The tree is a beech, still standing, though fast decaying. It is located some eight miles northeast of Jonesboro, the county seat of Washington, on the "waters of Boone's Creek," which creek was named after Daniel Boone, and on which (creek) it is certain Daniel Boone "camped" during a winter or two. The tree stands about two miles from the spring, where it has always been understood Boone's

camp was. More than twenty years ago, I have heard old gentlemen (living in the neighborhood of the tree), who were then from fifty to seventy years old, assert that the carving was on the tree when they were boys, and that the tradition in the community was that the inscription was on the tree when discovered by the first permanent settlers. The posture of the tree is "leaning," so that a "bar," or other animal could ascend it without difficulty.

While the letters could be clearly traced when I last looked at them, still because of the expansion of the bark, it was difficult, and I heard old gentlemen years ago remark upon the changed appearance of the inscription from what it was when they first knew it.

Boone certainly camped for a time under the tree; the creek is named after him (has always been known as Boone's Creek); the Civil District is named after him, and the post-office also. True, the story as to the carving is traditionary, but a man had as well question in that community the authenticity of "Holy Writ," as the fact that Boone carved the inscription on that tree.

I am very respectfully,

JOHN ALLISON.

NOTE B

The following copy of an original note of Boone's was sent me by Judge John N. Lea:

July the 20", 1786. Sir, The Land has Been Long Survayd and Not Knowing When the Money would be Rady Was the Reason of my not Returning the Works however the may be Returned when you pleas. But I must have Nother Copy of the Entry as I have lost that I had when I lost my plating instruments and only have the Short Field Notes. Just the Corse Distance and Corner trees pray send me Nother Copy that I may know how to give it the proper bounderry agreeable to the Location and I Will send the

plat to the offis medetly if you chose it, the expense is as follows

Survayer's fees	£ 9	3	8
Ragesters fees	7	14	0
Chanman	8	0	0
purvisions of the tower	2	0	0
	£26	17	8

You will also Send a Copy of the agreement betwixt Mr. [illegible] overton and myself Where I Red the warrants.

I am, sir, your omble servant,

DANIEL BOONE.

CHAPTER VII

SEVIER, ROBERTSON, AND THE WATAUGA COMMONWEALTH

1769–1774

Soon after the successful ending of the last colonial struggle with France, and the conquest of Canada, the British king issued a proclamation forbidding the English colonists from trespassing on Indian grounds, or moving west of the mountains. But in 1768, at the treaty of Fort Stanwix, the Six Nations agreed to surrender to the English all the lands lying between the Ohio and the Tennessee;[1] and this treaty was at once seized upon by the backwoodsmen as offering an excuse for settling beyond the mountains. However, the Iroquois had ceded lands to which they had no more right than a score or more other Indian tribes; and these latter, not having been consulted, felt at perfect liberty to make war on the intruders. In point of fact, no one tribe or set of tribes could cede Kentucky or Tennessee, because no one tribe or set of tribes owned either. The great hunting-grounds between the Ohio and the Tennessee formed a debatable land, claimed by every tribe that could hold its own against its rivals.[2]

[1] Then called the Cherokee.

[2] Volumes could be filled—and indeed it is hardly too much to say, have been filled—with worthless "proofs" of the ownership of Iroquois, Shawnees, or Cherokees, as the case might be. In truth, it would probably have been difficult to get any two members of the same tribe to have pointed out with precision the tribal limits. Each tribe's country was elastic, for it included all lands from which it was deemed possible to drive out the possessors. In 1773, the various parties of Long Hunters had just the same right to the whole of the territory in question that the Indians themselves had.

THE WATAUGA COMMONWEALTH

The eastern part of what is now Tennessee consists of a great hill-strewn, forest-clad valley, running from northeast to southwest, bounded on one side by the Cumberland, and on the other by the Great Smoky and Unaka mountains; the latter separating it from North Carolina. In this valley arise and end the Clinch, the Holston, the Watauga, the Nolichucky, the French Broad, and the other streams, whose combined volume makes the Tennessee River. The upper end of the valley lies in southwestern Virginia, the headwaters of some of the rivers being well within that State; and though the province was really part of North Carolina, it was separated therefrom by high mountain chains, while from Virginia it was easy to follow the water-courses down the valley. Thus, as elsewhere among the mountains forming the Western frontier, the first movements of population went parallel with, rather than across, the ranges. As in western Virginia the first settlers came, for the most part, from Pennsylvania, so, in turn, in what was then western North Carolina, and is now eastern Tennessee, the first settlers came mainly from Virginia, and, indeed, in great part, from this same Pennsylvanian stock.[1] Of course, in each case there

[1] Campbell MSS.

"The first settlers on Holston River were a remarkable race of people for their intelligence, enterprise, and hardy adventure. The greater portion of them had emigrated from the counties of Botetourt, Augusta, and Frederick, and others along the same valley, and from the upper counties of Maryland and Pennsylvania; were mostly descendants of Irish stock, and generally, where they had any religious opinions, were Presbyterians. A very large proportion were religious, and many were members of the church. There were some families, however, and amongst the mostly wealthy, that were extremely wild and dissipated in their habits.

"The first clergyman that came among them was the Rev. Charles Cummings, an Irishman by birth, but educated in Pennsylvania. This gentleman was one of the first settlers, defended his domicile for years with his rifle in hand, and built his first meeting-house on the very spot where he and two or three neighbors and one of his servants had had a severe skirmish with the Indians, in which one of his party was killed and another wounded. Here he preached to a very large and most respectable congregation for twenty or thirty years. He was a zealous Whig, and

was also a very considerable movement directly westward.[1] They were a sturdy race, enterprising and intelligent, fond of the strong excitement inherent in the adventurous frontier life. Their untamed and turbulent passions, and the lawless freedom of their lives made them a population very productive of wild, headstrong characters; yet, as a whole, they were a God-fearing race, as was but natural in those who sprang from the loins of the Irish Calvinists. Their preachers, all Presbyterians, followed close behind the first settlers, and shared their toil and dangers; they tilled their fields rifle in hand, and fought the Indians valorously. They felt that they were dispossessing the Canaanites, and were thus working the Lord's will in preparing the land for a race which they believed was more truly His chosen people than was that nation which Joshua led across the Jordan. They exhorted no less earnestly in the bare meeting-houses on Sunday, because their hands were

contributed much to kindle the patriotic fire which blazed forth among these people in the revolutionary struggle."

This is from a MS. sketch of the Holston pioneers, by the Hon. David Campbell, a son of one of the first settlers. The Campbell family, of Presbyterian Irish stock, first came to Pennsylvania, and drifted south. In the Revolutionary War it produced good soldiers and commanders, such as William and Arthur Campbell. The Campbells intermarried with the Prestons, Breckenridges, and other historic families; and their blood now runs in the veins of many of the noted men of the States south of the Potomac and Ohio.

[1] The first settlers on the Watauga included both Virginians (as "Captain" William Bean, whose child was the first born in what is now Tennessee; Ramsey, 94) and Carolinians (Haywood, 37). But many of these Carolina hill people were, like Boone and Henderson, members of families who had drifted down from the North. The position of the Presbyterian churches in all this Western hill country shows the origin of that portion of the people which gave the tone to the rest; and, as we have already seen, while some of the Presbyterians penetrated to the hills from Charleston, most came down from the North. The Presbyterian blood was, of course, Irish or Scotch; and the numerous English from the coast regions also mingled with the two former kindred stocks, and adopted their faith. The Huguenots, Hollanders, and many of the Germans, being of Calvinistic creed, readily assimilated themselves to the Presbyterians. The absence of Episcopacy on the Western border, while in part indicating merely the lack of religion in the backwoods, and the natural growth of dissent in such a society, also indicates that the people were not of pure English descent, and were of different stock from those east of them.

roughened with guiding the plough and wielding the axe on week-days; for they did not believe that being called to preach the word of God absolved them from earning their living by the sweat of their brows. The women, the wives of the settlers, were of the same iron temper. They fearlessly fronted every danger the men did, and they worked quite as hard. They prized the knowledge and learning they themselves had been forced to do without; and many a backwoods woman, by thrift and industry, by the sale of her butter and cheese, and the calves from her cows, enabled her husband to give his sons good schooling, and perhaps to provide for some favored member of the family the opportunity to secure a really first-class education.[1]

The valley in which these splendid pioneers of our people settled lay directly in the track of the Indian marauding parties, for the great war trail used by the Cherokees and by their Northern foes ran along its whole length. This war trail, or war trace, as it was then called, was in places very distinct, although apparently never as well marked as were some of the buffalo trails. It sent off a branch to Cumberland Gap, whence it ran directly north through Kentucky to the Ohio, being there known as the warriors' path. Along these trails the Northern and Southern Indians passed and repassed when they went to war against each other; and of course they were ready and eager to attack any white man who might settle down along their course.

In 1769, the year that Boone first went to Kentucky, the first permanent settlers came to the banks of the Watauga,[2] the settlement being merely an enlargement

[1] Campbell MSS.

[2] For this settlement see especially "Civil and Political History of the State of Tennessee," John Haywood (Knoxville, 1823), p. 37; also "Annals of Tennessee," J. G. M. Ramsey (Charleston, 1853), p. 92; "History of Middle Tennessee," A. W.

of the Virginia settlement, which had for a short time existed on the headwaters of the Holston, especially near Wolf Hills.[1] At first the settlers thought they were still in the domain of Virginia, for at that time the line marking her southern boundary had not been run so far west.[2] Indeed, had they not considered the land as belonging to Virginia, they would probably not at the moment have dared to intrude farther on territory claimed by the Indians. But while the treaty between the Crown and the Iroquois at Fort Stanwix[3] had resulted in the cession of whatever right the Six Nations had to the southwestern territory, another treaty was concluded about the same time[4] with the Cherokees, by which the latter agreed to surrender their claims to a small portion of this country, though as a matter of fact before the treaty was signed white settlers had crowded beyond the limits allowed them. These two treaties, in the first of which one set of tribes surrendered a small portion of land, while in the second an entirely different confederacy surrendered a larger tract, which, however, included part of the first cession, are sufficient to show the absolute confusion of the Indian land titles.

But in 1771, one of the newcomers,[5] who was a practical surveyor, ran out the Virginia boundary-line some distance to the westward, and discovered that the Watauga settlement came within the limits of North Carolina. Hitherto the settlers had supposed that they themselves were governed by the Virginian law, and

Putnam (Nashville, 1859), p. 21; the Address of the Hon. John Allison to the Tennessee Press Association (Nashville, 1887); and the "History of Tennessee," by James Phelan (Boston, 1888).

[1] Now Abingdon. [2] It only went to Steep Rock. [3] November 5, 1768.

[4] October 14, 1768, at Hard Labor, S. C., confirmed by the treaty of October 18, 1770, at Lockabar, S. C. Both of these treaties acknowledged the rights of the Cherokees to the major part of these northwestern hunting-grounds.

[5] Anthony Bledsoe.

that their rights as against the Indians were guaranteed by the Virginian government; but this discovery threw them back upon their own resources. They suddenly found themselves obliged to organize a civil government, under which they themselves should live, and at the same time to enter into a treaty on their own account with the neighboring Indians, to whom the land they were on apparently belonged.

The first need was even more pressing than the second. North Carolina was always a turbulent and disorderly colony, unable to enforce law and justice even in the long-settled districts; so that it was wholly out of the question to appeal to her for aid in governing a remote and outlying community. Moreover, about the time that the Watauga commonwealth was founded, the troubles in North Carolina came to a head. Open war ensued between the adherents of the royal governor, Tryon, on the one hand, and the Regulators, as the insurgents styled themselves, on the other, the struggle ending with the overthrow of the Regulators at the battle of the Alamance.[1]

As a consequence of these troubles, many people from the back counties of North Carolina crossed the mountains, and took up their abode among the pioneers on the Watauga[2] and upper Holston; the beautiful valley of the Nolichucky soon receiving its share of this stream of immigration. Among the first comers were many members of the class of desperate adventurers always to be found hanging round the outskirts of frontier civ-

[1] May 16, 1771.

[2] It is said that the greatest proportion of the early settlers came from Wake County, N. C., as did Robertson; but many of them, like Robertson, were of Virginian birth; and the great majority were of the same stock as the Virginian and Pennsylvanian mountaineers. Of the five members of the "court" or governing committee of Watauga, three were of Virginian birth, one came from South Carolina, and the origin of the other is not specified. Ramsey, 107.

ilization. Horse thieves, murderers, escaped bond-servants, runaway debtors—all, in fleeing from the law, sought to find a secure asylum in the wilderness. The brutal and lawless wickedness of these men, whose uncouth and raw savagery was almost more repulsive than that of city criminals, made it imperative upon the decent members of the community to unite for self-protection. The desperadoes were often mere human beasts of prey; they plundered whites and Indians impartially. They not only by their thefts and murders exasperated the Indians into retaliating on innocent whites, but, on the other hand, they also often deserted their own color and went to live among the redskins, becoming their leaders in the worst outrages.[1]

But the bulk of the settlers were men of sterling worth, fit to be the pioneer fathers of a mighty and beautiful State. They possessed the courage that enabled them to defy outside foes, together with the rough, practical common sense that allowed them to establish a simple but effective form of government, so as to preserve order among themselves. To succeed in the wilderness, it was necessary to possess not only daring, but also patience and the capacity to endure grinding toil. The pioneers were hunters and husbandmen. Each, by the aid of axe and brand, cleared his patch of corn land in the forest, close to some clear, swift-flowing stream, and by his skill with the rifle won from cane-

[1] In Collins, II, 345, is an account of what may be termed a type family of these frontier barbarians. They were named Harpe; and there is something revoltingly bestial in the record of their crimes; of how they travelled through the country, the elder brother, Micajah Harpe, with two wives, the younger with only one; of the appalling number of murders they committed, for even small sums of money; of their unnatural proposal to kill all their children, so that they should not be hampered in their flight; of their life in the woods, like wild beasts, and the ignoble ferocity of their ends. Scarcely less sombre reading is the account of how they were hunted down, and of the wolfish eagerness the borderers showed to massacre the women and children as well as the men.

brake and woodland the game on which his family lived until the first crop was grown.

A few more of the reckless and foolhardy, and more especially of those who were either merely hunters and not farmers, or else who were of doubtful character, lived entirely by themselves; but, as a rule, each knot of settlers was gathered together into a little stockaded hamlet, called a fort or station. This system of defensive villages was very distinctive of pioneer backwoods life, and was unique of its kind; without it the settlement of the West and Southwest would have been indefinitely postponed. In no other way could the settlers have combined for defense, while yet retaining their individual ownership of the land. The Watauga forts or palisaded villages were of the usual kind, the cabins and blockhouses connected by a heavy loopholed picket. They were admirably adapted for defense with the rifle. As there was no moat, there was a certain danger from an attack with fire unless water was stored within; and it was, of course, necessary to guard carefully against surprise. But to open assault they were practically impregnable, and they therefore offered a sure haven of refuge to the settlers in case of an Indian inroad. In time of peace, the inhabitants moved out, to live in their isolated log cabins and till the stump-dotted clearings. Trails led through the dark forests from one station to another, as well as to the settled districts beyond the mountains; and at long intervals men drove along them bands of pack-horses, laden with the few indispensable necessaries the settlers could not procure by their own labor. The pack-horse was the first, and for a long time the only, method of carrying on trade in the backwoods; and the business of the packer was one of the leading frontier industries.

The settlers worked hard and hunted hard, and lived both plainly and roughly. Their cabins were roofed with clapboards, or huge shingles, split from the log with maul and wedge, and held in place by heavy stones, or by poles; the floors were made of rived puncheons, hewn smooth on one surface; the chimney was outside the hut, made of rock when possible, otherwise of logs thickly plastered with clay that was strengthened with hogs' bristles or deer hair; in the great fireplace was a tongue on which to hang pothooks and kettle; the unglazed window had a wooden shutter, and the door was made of great clapboards.[1] The men made their own harness, farming implements, and domestic utensils; and, as in every other community still living in the heroic age, the smith was a person of the utmost importance. There was but one thing that all could have in any quantity, and that was land; each had all of this he wanted for the taking—or if it was known to belong to the Indians, he got its use for a few trinkets or a flask of whiskey. A few of the settlers still kept some of the Presbyterian austerity of character, as regards amusements; but, as a rule, they were fond of horse-racing, drinking, dancing, and fiddling. The corn-shuckings, flax-pullings, log-rollings (when the felled timber was rolled off the clearings), house-raisings, maple-sugar boilings, and the like were scenes of boisterous and light-hearted merriment, to which the whole neighborhood came, for it was accounted an insult if a man was not asked in to help on such occasions, and none but a base churl would refuse his assistance. The backwoods people had to front peril and hardship without stint, and they loved for the moment to leap out of the bounds

[1] In "American Pioneers," II, 445, is a full description of the better sort of backwoods log cabin.

of their narrow lives and taste the coarse pleasures that are always dear to a strong, simple, and primitive race. Yet underneath their moodiness and their fitful lightheartedness lay a spirit that when roused was terrible in its ruthless and stern intensity of purpose.

Such were the settlers of the Watauga, the founders of the commonwealth that grew into the State of Tennessee, who early in 1772 decided that they must form some kind of government that would put down wrongdoing and work equity between man and man. Two of their number already towered head and shoulders above the rest in importance, and merit especial mention; for they were destined for the next thirty years to play the chief parts in the history of that portion of the Southwest which largely through their own efforts became the State of Tennessee. These two men, neither of them yet thirty years of age, were John Sevier and James Robertson.[1]

Robertson first came to the Watauga early in 1770.[2] He had then been married for two years, and had been "learning his letters and to spell" from his well-educated wife; for he belonged to a backwoods family, even poorer than the average, and he had not so much as received the rudimentary education that could be acquired at an "old-field" school. But he was a man of remarkable natural powers, above the medium height, with wiry, robust form, light-blue eyes, fair complexion,

[1] Both were born in Virginia: Sevier in Rockingham County, September 23, 1745, and Robertson in Brunswick County, June 28, 1742.

[2] Putnam, p. 21; who, however, is evidently in error in thinking he was accompanied by Boone, as the latter was then in Kentucky. A recent writer revives this error in another form, stating that Robertson accompanied Boone to the Watauga in 1769. Boone, however, left on his travels on May 1, 1769, and in June was in Kentucky; whereas Putnam not only informs us definitely that Robertson went to the Watauga for the first time in 1770, but also mentions that when he went his eldest son was already born, and this event took place in June, 1769, so that it is certain Boone and Robertson were not together.

and dark hair; his somewhat sombre face had in it a look of self-contained strength that made it impressive;[1] and his taciturn, quiet, masterful way of dealing with men and affairs, together with his singular mixture of cool caution and most adventurous daring, gave him an immediate hold even upon such lawless spirits as those of the border. He was a mighty hunter; but, unlike Boone, hunting and exploration were to him secondary affairs, and he came to examine the lands with the eye of a pioneer settler. He intended to have a home where he could bring up his family, and, if possible, he wished to find rich lands, with good springs, whereto he might lead those of his neighbors who, like himself, eagerly desired to rise in the world, and to provide for the well-being of their children.

To find such a country, Robertson, then dwelling in North Carolina, decided to go across the mountains. He started off alone on his exploring expedition, rifle in hand, and a good horse under him. He crossed the ranges that continue northward the Great Smokies, and spent the summer in the beautiful hill-country where the springs of the Western waters flowed from the ground. He had never seen so lovely a land. The high valleys, through which the currents ran, were hemmed in by towering mountain walls, with cloud-capped peaks. The fertile loam forming the bottoms was densely covered with the growth of the primeval forest, broken here and there by glade-like openings, where herds of game grazed on the tall, thick grass.

Robertson was well treated by the few settlers, and stayed long enough to raise a crop of corn, the standby of the backwoods pioneer; like every other hunter,

[1] The description of his looks is taken from the statements of his descendants, and of the grandchildren of his contemporaries.

explorer, Indian fighter, and wilderness wanderer, he lived on the game he shot, and the small quantity of maize he was able to carry with him.[1] In the late fall, however, when recrossing the mountain on his way home through the trackless forests, both game and corn failed him. He lost his way, was forced to abandon his horse among impassable precipices, and finally found his rifle useless, owing to the powder having become soaked. For fourteen days he lived almost wholly on nuts and wild berries, and was on the point of death from starvation when he met two hunters on horseback, who fed him and let him ride their horses by turns, and brought him safely to his home.

Such hardships were little more than matter-of-course incidents in a life like his; and he at once prepared to set out with his family for the new land. His accounts greatly excited his neighbors, and sixteen families made ready to accompany him. The little caravan started, under Robertson's guidance, as soon as the ground had dried after the winter rains in the spring of 1771.[2] They travelled in the usual style of backwoods emigrants; the men on foot, rifle on shoulder, the elder children driving the lean cows, while the women, the young children, and the few household goods and implements of husbandry were carried on the backs of the pack-horses; for in settling the backwoods during the last century, the pack-horse played the same part that in the present century was taken by the canvas-covered emigrant wagon, the white-topped "prairie-schooner."

Once arrived at the Watauga, the Carolina newcomers mixed readily with the few Virginians already

[1] The importance of "maize" to the Western settler is shown by the fact that in our tongue it has now monopolized the title of "corn."

[2] Putnam, p. 24, says it was after the battle of the Great Alamance, which took place May 16, 1771. An untrustworthy tradition says March.

on the ground; and Robertson speedily became one of the leading men in the little settlement. On an island in the river he built a house of logs with the bark still on them on the outside, though hewed smooth within; tradition says that it was the largest in the settlement. Certainly it belonged to the better class of backwoods cabins, with a loft and several rooms, a roof of split saplings, held down by weighty poles, a log veranda in front, and a huge fireplace of sticks and stones laid in clay, wherein the pile of blazing logs roared loudly in cool weather. The furniture was probably precisely like that in other houses of the class; a rude bed, table, settee, and chest of drawers, a spinning-jenny, and either three-legged stools or else chairs with backs and seats of undressed deer-hides. Robertson's energy and his remarkable natural ability brought him to the front at once, in every way; although, as already said, he had much less than even the average backwoods education, for he could not read when he was married, while most of the frontiersmen could not only read but also write, or at least sign their names.[1]

Sevier, who came to the Watauga early in 1772, nearly a year after Robertson and his little colony had arrived, differed widely from his friend in almost every respect save high-mindedness and dauntless, invincible courage. He was a gentleman by birth and breeding, the son of a Huguenot who had settled in the Shenandoah valley. He had received a fair education, and though never fond of books, he was to the end of his days an interested and intelligent observer of men and things, both in America and Europe. He corresponded on inti-

[1] In examining numerous original drafts of petitions and the like, signed by hundreds of the original settlers of Tennessee and Kentucky, I have been struck by the small proportion—not much over three or four per cent at the outside—of men who made their mark instead of signing.

mate and equal terms with Madison, Franklin, and others of our most polished statesmen; while Robertson's letters, when he had finally learned to write them himself, were almost as remarkable for their phenomenally bad spelling as for their shrewd common sense and homely, straightforward honesty. Sevier was a very handsome man; during his lifetime he was reputed the handsomest in Tennessee. He was tall, fair-skinned, blue-eyed, brown-haired, of slender build, with erect, military carriage and commanding bearing, his lithe, finely proportioned figure being well set off by the hunting-shirt which he almost invariably wore. From his French forefathers he inherited a gay, pleasure-loving temperament, that made him the most charming of companions. His manners were polished and easy, and he had great natural dignity. Over the backwoodsmen he exercised an almost unbounded influence, due as much to his ready tact, invariable courtesy, and lavish, generous hospitality as to the skill and dashing prowess which made him the most renowned Indian fighter of the Southwest. He had an eager, impetuous nature, and was very ambitious, being almost as fond of popularity as of Indian fighting.[1] He was already married and the father of two children when he came to the Watauga, and, like Robertson, was seeking a new and better home for his family in the West. So far, his life had been as uneventful as that of any other spirited young borderer; his business had been that of a frontier Indian trader; he had taken part in one or two unim-

[1] See, in the collection of the Tennessee Historical Society at Nashville, the MS. notes containing an account of Sevier, given by one of the old settlers, named Hillsman. Hillsman especially dwells on the skill with which Sevier could persuade the backwoodsmen to come round to his own way of thinking, while at the same time making them believe that they were acting on their own ideas, and adds: "Whatever he had was at the service of his friends and for the promotion of the Sevier party, which sometimes embraced nearly all the population."

portant Indian skirmishes.[1] Later, he was commissioned by Lord Dunmore as a captain in the Virginia line.

Such were Sevier and Robertson, the leaders in the little frontier outpost of civilization that was struggling to maintain itself on the Watauga; and these two men afterward proved themselves to be, with the exception of George Rogers Clark, the greatest of the first generation of Trans-Alleghany pioneers.

Their followers were worthy of them. All alike were keenly alive to the disadvantages of living in a community where there was neither law nor officer to enforce it. Accordingly, with their characteristic capacity for combination, so striking as existing together with the equally characteristic capacity for individual self-help, the settlers determined to organize a government

[1] Mr. James Gilmore (Edmund Kirke), in his "John Sevier," makes some assertions, totally unbacked by proof, about his hero's alleged feats, when only a boy, in the wars between the Virginians and the Indians. He gives no dates, but can only refer to Pontiac's war. Sevier was then eighteen years old, but nevertheless is portrayed, among other things, as leading "a hundred hardy borderers" into the Indian country, burning their villages and "often defeating bodies of five times his own numbers." These statements are supported by no better authority than traditions gathered a century and a quarter after the event, and must be dismissed as mere fable. They show a total and rather amusing ignorance not only of the conditions of Indian warfare, but also of the history of the particular contest referred to. Mr. Gilmore forgets that we have numerous histories of the war in which Sevier is supposed to have distinguished himself, and that in not one of them is there a syllable hinting at what he says. Neither Sevier nor any one else ever with a hundred men defeated "five times his number" of northwestern Indians in the woods; and, during Sevier's life in Virginia, the only defeat ever suffered by such a body of Indians was at Bushy Run, when Bouquet gained a hard-fought victory. After the end of Pontiac's war there was no expedition of importance undertaken by Virginians against the Indians until 1774, and of Pontiac's war itself we have full knowledge. Sevier was neither leader nor participant in any such marvellous feats as Mr. Gilmore describes; on the contrary, the skirmishes in which he may have been engaged were of such small importance that no record remains concerning them. Had Sevier done any such deeds all the colonies would have rung with his exploits, instead of their remaining utterly unknown for a hundred and twenty-five years. It is extraordinary that any author should be willing to put his name to such reckless misstatements, in what purports to be a history and not a book of fiction.

of their own. They promptly put their resolution into effect early in the spring of 1772, Robertson being apparently the leader in the movement.

They decided to adopt written articles of agreement, by which their conduct should be governed; and these were known as the Articles of the Watauga Association. They formed a written constitution, the first ever adopted west of the mountains, or by a community composed of American-born freemen. It is this fact of the early independence and self-government of the settlers along the headwaters of the Tennessee that gives to their history its peculiar importance. They were the first men of American birth to establish a free and independent community on the continent. Even before this date, there had been straggling settlements of Pennsylvanians and Virginians along the headwaters of the Ohio; but these settlements remained mere parts of the colonies behind them, and neither grew into a separate community, nor played a distinctive part in the growth of the West.

The first step taken by the Watauga settlers,[1] when they had determined to organize, was to meet in general convention, holding a kind of folk-thing, akin to the New England town meeting. They then elected a representative assembly, a small parliament or "witanagemot," which met at Robertson's station. Apparently the freemen of each little fort or palisaded village, each blockhouse that was the centre of a group of detached cabins and clearings, sent a member to this first frontier legislature.[2] It consisted of thirteen representatives, who proceeded to elect from their number five

[1] The Watauga settlers and those of Carter's Valley were the first to organize; the Nolichucky people came in later.

[2] Putnam, 30.

—among them Sevier and Robertson—to form a committee or court, which should carry on the actual business of government, and should exercise both judicial and executive functions. This court had a clerk and a sheriff, or executive officer, who respectively recorded and enforced their decrees.

The five members of this court, who are sometimes referred to as arbitrators and sometimes as commissioners, had entire control of all matters affecting the common weal; and all affairs in controversy were settled by the decision of a majority. They elected one of their number as chairman, he being also ex-officio chairman of the committee of thirteen; and all their proceedings were noted for the prudence and moderation with which they behaved in their somewhat anomalous position. They were careful to avoid embroiling themselves with the neighboring colonial legislatures; and in dealing with non-residents they made them give bonds to abide by their decision, thus avoiding any necessity of proceeding against their persons. On behalf of the community itself, they were not only permitted to control its internal affairs, but also to secure lands by making treaties with a foreign power, the Indians—a distinct exercise of the right of sovereignty. They heard and adjudicated all cases of difference between the settlers themselves; and took measures for the common safety. In fact, the dwellers, in this little outlying frontier commonwealth, exercised the rights of full statehood for a number of years; establishing in true American style a purely democratic government with representative institutions, in which, under certain restrictions, the will of the majority was supreme, while, nevertheless, the largest individual freedom and the utmost liberty of individual initiative were retained. The framers showed

the American predilection for a written constitution or civil compact;[1] and, what was more important, they also showed the common-sense American spirit that led them to adopt the scheme of government which should in the simplest way best serve their need, without bothering their heads over mere high-sounding abstractions.

The court or committee held their sessions at stated and regular times, and took the law of Virginia as their standard for decisions. They saw to the recording of deeds and wills, settled all questions of debt, issued marriage licenses, and carried on a most vigorous warfare against law-breakers, especially horse thieves.[2] For six years their government continued in full vigor; then, in February, 1778, North Carolina having organized Washington County, which included all of what is now Tennessee, the governor of that State appointed justices of the peace and militia officers for the new county, and the old system came to an end. But Sevier, Robertson, and their fellow committeemen were all members of the new court, and continued almost without change their former simple system of procedure and direct and expeditious methods of administering justice; as justices of the peace they merely continued to act as they acted while arbitrators of the Watauga Association, and in their summary mode of dealing with evildoers paid a good deal more heed to the essence than to the forms of law. One record shows that a horse thief

[1] The original articles of the Watauga Association have been lost, and no copies are extant. All we know of the matter is derived from Haywood, Ramsey, and Putnam, three historians to whose praiseworthy industry Tennessee owes as much as Kentucky does to Marshall, Butler, and Collins. Ramsey, by the way, chooses rather inappropriate adjectives when he calls the government "paternal and patriarchal."

[2] A very good account of this government is given in Allison's Address, pp. 5–8, and from it the examples in the text are taken.

was arrested on Monday, tried on Wednesday, and hung on Friday of the same week. Another deals with a claimant who, by his attorney, moved to be sworn into his office of clerk, "but the court swore in James Sevier, well knowing that said Sevier had been elected," and being evidently unwilling to waste their time hearing a contested-election case when their minds were already made up as to the equity of the matter. They exercised the right of making suspicious individuals leave the county.[1] They also at times became censors of morals, and interfered with straightforward effectiveness to right wrongs for which a more refined and elaborate system of jurisprudence would have provided only cumbersome and inadequate remedies. Thus one of their entries is to the effect that a certain man is ordered "to return to his family and demean himself as a good citizen, he having admitted in open court that he had left his wife and took up with another woman." From the character of the judges who made the decision, it is safe to presume that the delinquent either obeyed it or else promptly fled to the Indians for safety.[2] This fleeing to the Indians, by the way, was a feat often performed by the worst criminals—for the renegade, the man who had "painted his face" and deserted those of his own color, was a being as well known as he was abhorred and despised on the border, where such a deed was held to be the one unpardonable crime.

So much for the way in which the whites kept order among themselves. The second part of their task, the adjustment of their relations with their red neighbors,

[1] A right the exercise of which is of course susceptible to great abuse, but, nevertheless, is often absolutely necessary to the well-being of a frontier community. In almost every case where I have personally known it exercised, the character of the individual ordered off justified the act.

[2] Allison's Address.

was scarcely less important. Early in 1772, Virginia made a treaty with the Cherokee nation which established as the boundary between them a line running west from White Top Mountain in latitude thirty-six degrees, thirty minutes.[1] Immediately afterward the agent[2] of the British Government among the Cherokees ordered the Watauga settlers to instantly leave their lands. They defied him, and refused to move; but feeling the insecurity of their tenure they deputed two commissioners, of whom Robertson was one, to make a treaty with the Cherokees. This was successfully accomplished, the Indians leasing to the associated settlers all the lands on the Watauga waters for the space of eight years, in consideration of about six thousand dollars' worth of blankets, paint, muskets, and the like.[3] The amount advanced was reimbursed to the men advancing it by the sale of the lands in small parcels to new settlers,[4] for the time of the lease.[5]

After the lease was signed, a day was appointed on which to hold a great race, as well as wrestling-matches and other sports, at Watauga. Not only many whites from the various settlements, but also a number of Indians, came to see or take part in the sports; and all went well until the evening, when some lawless men from Wolf Hills, who had been lurking in the woods

[1] Ramsey, 109. Putnam says 36° 35′.

[2] Alexander Cameron.

[3] Haywood, 43.

[4] Meanwhile Carter's Valley, then believed to lie in Virginia, had been settled by Virginians; the Indians robbed a trader's store, and indemnified the owners by giving them land, at the treaty of Sycamore Shoals. This land was leased in job lots to settlers, who, however, kept possession without paying when they found it lay in North Carolina.

[5] A similar but separate lease was made by the settlers on the Nolichucky, who acquired a beautiful and fertile valley in exchange for the merchandise carried on the back of a single pack-horse. Among the whites themselves transfers of land were made in very simple forms and conveyed not the fee simple but merely the grantor's claim.

roundabout,[1] killed an Indian, whereat his fellows left the spot in great anger.

The settlers now saw themselves threatened with a bloody and vindictive Indian war, and were plunged in terror and despair; yet they were rescued by the address and daring of Robertson. Leaving the others to build a formidable palisaded fort, under the leadership of Sevier, Robertson set off alone through the woods and followed the great war trace down to the Cherokee towns. His mission was one of the greatest peril, for there was imminent danger that the justly angered savages would take his life. But he was a man who never rushed heedlessly into purposeless peril, and never flinched from a danger which there was an object in encountering. His quiet, resolute fearlessness doubtless impressed the savages to whom he went, and helped to save his life; moreover, the Cherokees knew him, trusted his word, and were probably a little overawed by a certain air of command to which all men that were thrown in contact with him bore witness. His ready tact and knowledge of Indian character did the rest. He persuaded the chiefs and warriors to meet him in council, assured them of the anger and sorrow with which all the Watauga people viewed the murder, which had undoubtedly been committed by some outsider, and wound up by declaring his determination to try to have the wrong-doer arrested and punished according to his crime. The Indians, already pleased with his embassy, finally consented to pass the affair over and not take vengeance upon innocent men. Then the daring backwoods diplomatist, well pleased with the success of his mission, returned to the anxious little community.

[1] Haywood says they were named Crabtree; Putnam hints that they had lost a brother when Boone's party was attacked and his son killed; but the attack on Boone did not take place till over a year after this time.

The incident, taken in connection with the plundering of a store kept by two whites in Holston Valley at the same time, and the unprovoked assault on Boone's party in Powell's Valley a year later, shows the extreme difficulty of preventing the worst men of each color from wantonly attacking the innocent. There was hardly a peaceable red or law-abiding white who could not recite injuries he had received from members of the opposite race; and his sense of the wrongs he had suffered, as well as the general frontier indifference to crimes committed against others, made him slow in punishing similar outrages by his own people. The Watauga settlers discountenanced wrong being done the Indians, and tried to atone for it, but they never hunted the offenders down with the necessary mercilessness that alone could have prevented a repetition of their offenses. Similarly, but to an even greater degree, the good Indians shielded the bad.[1]

For several years after they made their lease with the Cherokees the men of the Watauga were not troubled by their Indian neighbors. They had to fear nothing more than a drought, a freshet, a forest-fire, or an unusually deep snowfall if hunting on the mountains in midwinter. They lived in peace, hunting and farming, marrying, giving in marriage, and rearing many healthy children. By degrees they wrought out of the stubborn wilderness comfortable homes, filled with plenty. The stumps were drawn out of the clearings, and other grains were sown besides corn. Beef, pork, and mutton were sometimes placed on the table, besides the more common venison, bear meat, and wild turkey. The women

[1] Even La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt (8, 95), who loathed the backwoodsmen—few polished Europeans being able to see any but the repulsive side of frontier character, a side certainly very often prominent—also speaks of the tendency of the worst Indians to go to the frontier to rob and murder.

wove good clothing, the men procured good food, the log cabins, if homely and rough, yet gave ample warmth and shelter. The families throve, and life was happy, even though varied with toil, danger, and hardship. Books were few, and it was some years before the first church—Presbyterian, of course—was started in the region.[1] The backwoods Presbyterians managed their church affairs much as they did their civil government: each congregation appointed a committee to choose ground, to build a meeting-house, to collect the minister's salary, and to pay all charges, by taxing the members proportionately for the same, the committee being required to turn in a full account and receive instructions at a general session or meeting held twice every year.[2]

Thus the Watauga folk were the first Americans who, as a separate body, moved into the wilderness to hew out dwellings for themselves and their children, trusting only to their own shrewd heads, stout hearts, and strong arms, unhelped and unhampered by the power nominally their sovereign.[3] They built up a commonwealth which had many successors; they showed that the frontiersmen could do their work unassisted; for they not only proved that they were made of stuff stern enough to hold its own against outside pressure of any sort, but they also made it evident that having won the land they were competent to govern both it and themselves. They were the first to do what the whole nation has since done. It has often been said that we owe all our success to our surroundings; that any race with our opportunities could have done as well as we have done.

[1] Salem Church was founded (Allison, 8) in 1777, by Samuel Doak, a Princeton graduate, and a man of sound learning, who also at the same time started Washington College, the first real institution of learning south of the Alleghanies.

[2] "Annals of Augusta," 21.

[3] See Note, p. 179.

Undoubtedly our opportunities have been great; undoubtedly we have often and lamentably failed in taking advantage of them. But what nation ever has done all that was possible with the chances offered it? The Spaniards, the Portuguese, and the French, not to speak of the Russians in Siberia, have all enjoyed, and yet have failed to make good use of, the same advantages which we have turned to good account. The truth is, that in starting a new nation in a new country, as we have done, while there are exceptional chances to be taken advantage of, there are also exceptional dangers and difficulties to be overcome. None but heroes can succeed wholly in the work. It is a good thing for us at times to compare what we have done with what we could have done had we been better and wiser; it may make us try in the future to raise our abilities to the level of our opportunities. Looked at absolutely, we must frankly acknowledge that we have fallen very far short indeed of the high ideal we should have reached. Looked at relatively, it must also be said that we have done better than any other nation or race working under our conditions.

The Watauga settlers outlined in advance the nation's work. They tamed the rugged and shaggy wilderness, they bid defiance to outside foes, and they successfully solved the difficult problem of self-government.

NOTE

Recently one or two histories of the times and careers of Robertson and Sevier have been published by "Edmund Kirke," Mr. James R. Gilmore. They are charmingly written, and are of real service as calling attention to a neglected portion of our history and making it interesting. But they entirely fail to discriminate between the provinces of his-

tory and fiction. It is greatly to be regretted that Mr. Gilmore did not employ his powers in writing an avowed historical novel, treating of the events he discusses; such a work from him would have a permanent value, like John P. Kennedy's "Horseshoe Robinson." In their present form his works cannot be accepted even as offering material on which to form a judgment, except in so far as they contain repetitions of statements given by Ramsey or Putnam. I say this with real reluctance, for my relations with Mr. Gilmore personally have been pleasant. I was at the outset prepossessed in favor of his books; but as soon as I came to study them I found that (except for what was drawn from the printed Tennessee State histories) they were extremely untrustworthy. Oral tradition has a certain value of its own, if used with great discretion and intelligence; but it is rather startling to find any one blandly accepting as gospel alleged oral traditions gathered one hundred and twenty-five years after the event, especially when they relate to such subjects as the losses and numbers of Indian war-parties. No man with the slightest knowledge of frontiersmen or frontier life could commit such a mistake. If any one wishes to get at the value of oral tradition of an Indian fight a century old, let him go out West and collect the stories of Custer's battle, which took place only a dozen years ago. I think I have met or heard of fifty "solitary survivors" of Custer's defeat; and I could collect certainly a dozen complete accounts of both it and Reno's fight, each believed by a goodly number of men, and no two relating the story in an even approximately similar fashion. Mr. Gilmore apparently accepts all such accounts indiscriminately, and embodies them in his narrative without even a reference to his authorities. I particularize one or two out of very many instances in the chapters dealing with the Cherokee wars.

Books founded upon an indiscriminate acceptance of any and all such traditions or alleged traditions are a little absurd, unless, as already said, they are avowedly merely historic novels, when they may be both useful and interesting. I am obliged to say with genuine regret, after careful examination of Mr. Gilmore's books, that I cannot accept any single unsupported statement they contain as even requiring

an examination into its probability. I would willingly pass them by without comment, did I not fear that my silence might be construed into an acceptance of their truth. Moreover, I notice that some writers, like the editors of the "Cyclopædia of American Biography," seem inclined to take the volumes seriously.

CHAPTER VIII

LORD DUNMORE'S WAR

1774

On the eve of the Revolution, in 1774, the frontiersmen had planted themselves firmly among the Alleghanies. Directly west of them lay the untenanted wilderness, traversed only by the war-parties of the red men and the hunting-parties of both reds and whites. No settlers had yet penetrated it, and until they did so there could be within its borders no chance of race warfare, unless we call by that name the unchronicled and unending contest in which, now and then, some solitary white woodsman slew, or was slain by, his painted foe. But in the Southwest and the Northwest alike, the area of settlement already touched the homelands of the tribes, and hence the horizon was never quite free from the cloud of threatening Indian war; yet for the moment the Southwest was at peace, for the Cherokees were still friendly.

It was in the Northwest that the danger of collision was most imminent; for there the whites and Indians had wronged one another for a generation, and their interests were, at the time, clashing more directly than ever. Much the greater part of the Western frontier was held or claimed by Virginia, whose royal governor was, at the time, Lord Dunmore. He was an ambitious, energetic man, who held his allegiance as being due first to the Crown, but who, nevertheless, was always eager to champion the cause of Virginia as against either the Indians or her sister colonies. The short but fierce and

eventful struggle that now broke out was fought wholly by Virginians, and was generally known by the name of Lord Dunmore's war.

Virginia, under her charter, claimed that her boundaries ran across to the South Seas, to the Pacific Ocean. The King of Britain had graciously granted her the right to take so much of the continent as lay within these lines, provided she could win it from the Indians, French, and Spaniards; and provided also she could prevent herself from being ousted by the Crown, or by some of the other colonies. A number of grants had been made with the like large liberality, and it was found that they sometimes conflicted with one another. The consequence was that while the boundaries were well marked near the coast, where they separated Virginia from the long-settled regions of Maryland and North Carolina, they became exceeding vague and indefinite the moment they touched the mountains. Even at the South this produced confusion, and induced the settlers of the upper Holston to consider themselves as Virginians, not Carolinians; but at the North the effect was still more confusing, and nearly resulted in bringing about an intercolonial war between Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The Virginians claimed all of extreme western Pennsylvania, especially Fort Pitt and the valley of the Monongahela, and, in 1774, proceeded boldly to exercise jurisdiction therein.[1] Indeed, a strong party among the settlers favored the Virginian claim; whereas it would have been quite impossible to arouse anywhere in Virginia the least feeling in support of a similar claim on behalf of Pennsylvania. The borderers had a great

[1] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, p. 454. Report of Pennsylvania Commissioners, June 27, 1774.

contempt for the sluggish and timid government of the Quaker province, which was very lukewarm in protecting them in their rights—or, indeed, in punishing them when they did wrong to others. In fact, it seems probable that they would have declared for Virginia even more strongly, had it not been for the very reason that their feeling of independence was so surly as to make them suspicious of all forms of control; and they therefore objected almost as much to Virginian as Pennsylvanian rule, and regarded the outcome of the dispute with a certain indifference.[1]

For a time in the early part of 1774 there seemed quite as much likelihood of the Virginians being drawn into a fight with the Pennsylvanians as with the Shawnees. While the Pennsylvanian commissioners were trying to come to an agreement concerning the boundaries with Lord Dunmore, the representatives of the two contesting parties at Fort Pitt were on the verge of actual collision. The earl's agent in the disputed territory was a Captain John Conolly,[2] a man of violent temper and bad character. He embodied the men favorable to his side as a sort of Virginian militia, with which he not only menaced both hostile and friendly Indians, but the adherents of the Pennsylvanian government as well. He destroyed their houses, killed their cattle and hogs, impressed their horses, and finally so angered them that they threatened to take refuge in the stockade at Fort Pitt and defy him to open war—although even in the midst of these quarrels with Conolly

[1] Maryland was also involved, along her western frontier, in border difficulties with her neighbors; the first we hear of the Cresap family is their having engaged in a real skirmish with the Pennsylvanian authorities. See also "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, 547.

[2] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, 394, 449, 469, etc. He was generally called Dr. Conolly.

their loyalty to the Quaker State was somewhat doubtful.[1]

The Virginians were the only foes the Western Indians really dreaded; for their backwoodsmen were of warlike temper, and had learned to fight effectively in the forest. The Indians styled them Long Knives; or, to be more exact, they called them collectively the "Big Knife." [2] There have been many accounts given of the origin of this name, some ascribing it to the long knives worn by the hunters and backwoodsmen generally, others to the fact that some of the noted Virginian fighters in their early skirmishes were armed with swords. At any rate, the title was accepted by all the Indians as applying to their most determined foes among the colonists; and, finally, after we had become a nation, was extended so as to apply to Americans generally.

The war that now ensued was not general. The Six Nations, as a whole, took no part in it, while Pennsylvania also stood aloof; indeed, at one time it was proposed that the Pennsylvanians and Iroquois should jointly endeavor to mediate between the combatants.[3] The struggle was purely between the Virginians and the northwestern Indians.

The interests of the Virginians and Pennsylvanians conflicted not only in respect to the ownership of the land, but also in respect to the policy to be pursued regarding the Indians. The former were armed colonists, whose interest it was to get actual possession of the soil;[4] whereas in Pennsylvania the Indian trade was

[1] See *ibid.*, 463, 471, etc., especially St. Clair's letters, *passim.*

[2] In most of the original treaties, "talks," etc., preserved in the Archives of the State Department where the translation is exact, the word "Big Knife" is used.

[3] Letter of John Penn, June 28, 1774. "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. IV.

[4] *Ibid.*, 465.

very important and lucrative, and the numerous traders to the Indian towns were anxious that the redskins should remain in undisturbed enjoyment of their forests, and that no white man should be allowed to come among them; moreover, so long as they were able to make heavy profits they were utterly indifferent to the well-being of the white frontiersmen, and in return incurred the suspicion and hatred of the latter. The Virginians accused the traders of being the main cause of the difficulty,[1] asserting that they sometimes incited the Indians to outrages, and always, even in the midst of hostilities, kept them supplied with guns and ammunition, and even bought from them the horses that they had stolen on their plundering expeditions against the Virginian border.[2] These last accusations were undoubtedly justified, at least in great part, by the facts. The interests of the white trader from Pennsylvania and of the white settler from Virginia were so far from being identical that they were usually diametrically opposite.

The northwestern Indians had been nominally at peace with the whites for ten years, since the close of Bouquet's campaign. But Bouquet had inflicted a very slight punishment upon them, and in concluding an unsatisfactory peace had caused them to make but a partial reparation for the wrongs they had done.[3] They remained haughty and insolent, irritated rather than awed by an ineffective chastisement, and their young men made frequent forays on the frontier. Each of the ten years of nominal peace saw plenty of bloodshed. Recently they had been seriously alarmed by the tendency of the whites to encroach on the great hunting-

[1] *Ibid.*, 722.
[2] *Ibid.*, 872.
[3] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, p. 1015.

grounds south of the Ohio;[1] for here and there hunters or settlers were already beginning to build cabins along the course of that stream. The cession by the Iroquois of these same hunting-grounds, at the treaty of Fort Stanwix, while it gave the whites a colorable title, merely angered the northwestern Indians. Half a century earlier they would hardly have dared dispute the power of the Six Nations to do what they chose with any land that could be reached by their war-parties; but in 1774 they felt quite able to hold their own against their old oppressors, and had no intention of acquiescing in any arrangement the latter might make, unless it was also clearly to their own advantage.

In the decade before Lord Dunmore's war there had been much mutual wrong-doing between the northwestern Indians and the Virginian borderers; but on the whole the latter had occupied the position of being sinned against more often than that of sinning. The chief offense of the whites was that they trespassed upon uninhabited lands, which they forthwith proceeded to cultivate, instead of merely roaming over them to hunt the game and butcher one another. Doubtless occasional white men would murder an Indian if they got a chance, and the traders almost invariably cheated the tribesmen. But, as a whole, the traders were Indian rather than white in their sympathies, and the whites rarely made forays against their foes avowedly for horses and plunder, while the Indians on their side were continually indulging in such inroads. Every year parties of young red warriors crossed the Ohio to plunder the outlying farms, burn down the buildings, scalp the

[1] McAfee MSS. This is the point especially insisted on by Cornstalk in his speech to the adventurers in 1773; he would fight before seeing the whites drive off the game.

inmates, and drive off the horses.[1] Year by year the exasperation of the borderers grew greater and the tale of the wrongs they had to avenge longer.[2] Occasionally, they took a brutal and ill-judged vengeance, which usually fell on innocent Indians,[3] and raised up new foes for the whites. The savages grew continually more hostile, and in the fall of 1773 their attacks became so frequent that it was evident a general outbreak was at hand; eleven people were murdered in the county of Fincastle alone.[4] The Shawnees were the leaders in all these outrages; but the outlaw bands, such as the Mingos and Cherokees, were as bad, and parties of Wyandots and Delawares, as well as of the various Miami and Wabash tribes, joined them.

Thus the spring of 1774 opened with everything ripe for an explosion. The Virginian borderers were fearfully exasperated, and ready to take vengeance upon any Indians, whether peaceful or hostile; while the Shawnees and Mingos, on their side, were arrogant and overbearing, and yet alarmed at the continual advance of the whites. The headstrong rashness of Conolly, who was acting as Lord Dunmore's lieutenant on the border, and who was equally willing to plunge into a war with Pennsylvania or the Shawnees, served as a firebrand to ignite this mass of tinder. The borderers were anxious for a war; and Lord Dunmore was not inclined to balk them. He was ambitious of glory, and probably

[1] In the McAfee MSS., as already quoted, there is an account of the Shawnee war-party whom the McAfees encountered in 1773 returning from a successful horse-stealing expedition.

[2] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, 872. Dunmore, in his speech, enumerates nineteen men, women, and children, who had been killed by the Indians in 1771, '72, and '73, and these were but a small fraction of the whole. "This was before a drop of Shawnee blood was shed."

[3] "Trans-Alleghany Pioneers," p. 262, gives an example that happened in 1772.

[4] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I. Letter of Colonel William Preston, August 13, 1774.

thought that in the midst of the growing difficulties between the mother country and the colonies, it would be good policy to distract the Virginians' minds by an Indian war, which, if he conducted it to a successful conclusion, might strengthen his own position.[1]

There were on the border at the moment three or four men whose names are so intimately bound up with the history of this war that they deserve a brief mention. One was Michael Cresap, a Maryland frontiersman, who had come to the banks of the Ohio with the purpose of making a home for his family.[2] He was of the regular pioneer type: a good woodsman, sturdy and brave, a fearless fighter, devoted to his friends and his country; but also, when his blood was heated and his savage instincts fairly roused, inclined to regard any red man, whether hostile or friendly, as a being who should be

[1] Many local historians, including Brantz Mayer (Logan and Cresap, p. 85), ascribe to the earl treacherous motives. Brantz Mayer puts it thus: "It was probably Lord Dunmore's desire to incite a war which would arouse and band the savages of the West, so that in the anticipated struggle with the united colonies the British home-interest might ultimately avail itself of these children of the forest as ferocious and formidable allies in the onslaught on the Americans." This is much too futile a theory to need serious discussion. The war was of the greatest advantage to the American cause, for it kept the northwestern Indians off our hands for the first two years of the Revolutionary struggle; and had Lord Dunmore been the far-seeing and malignant being that this theory supposes, it would have been impossible for him not also to foresee that such a result was absolutely inevitable. There is no reason whatever to suppose that he was not doing his best for the Virginians; he deserved their gratitude, and he got it for the time being. The accusations of treachery against him were afterthoughts, and must be set down to mere vulgar rancor, unless, at least, some faint shadow of proof is advanced. When the Revolutionary War broke out, however, the earl, undoubtedly, like so many other British officials, advocated the most outrageous measures to put down the insurgent colonists.

[2] See Brantz Mayer, p. 86, for a very proper attack on those historians who stigmatize as land-jobbers and speculators the perfectly honest settlers, whose encroachments on the Indian hunting-grounds were so bitterly resented by the savages. Such attacks are mere pieces of sentimental injustice. The settlers were perfectly right in feeling that they had a right to settle on the vast stretches of unoccupied ground, however wrong some of their individual deeds may have been. But Mayer, following Jacobs's "Life of Cresap," undoubtedly paints his hero in altogether too bright colors.

slain on sight. Nor did he condemn the brutal deeds done by others on innocent Indians.

The next was a man named Greathouse, of whom it is enough to know that, together with certain other men whose names have for the most part, by a merciful chance, been forgotten,[1] he did a deed such as could only be committed by inhuman and cowardly scoundrels.

The other two actors in this tragedy were both Indians, and were both men of much higher stamp. One was Cornstalk, the Shawnee chief; a far-sighted seer, gloomily conscious of the impending ruin of his race, a great orator, a mighty warrior; a man who knew the value of his word and prized his honor, and who fronted death with quiet, disdainful heroism; and yet a fierce, cruel, and treacherous savage to those with whom he was at enmity, a killer of women and children whom we first hear of in Pontiac's war, as joining in the massacre of unarmed and peaceful settlers who had done him no wrong, and who thought that he was friendly.[2] The other was Logan, an Iroquois warrior, who lived at that time away from the bulk of his people, but who was a man of note—in the loose phraseology of the border, a chief or head man—among the outlying parties of Senecas and Mingos, and the fragments of broken tribes that dwelt along the upper Ohio. He was a man of splendid appearance: over six feet high, straight as a spear-shaft, with a countenance as open as it was brave and manly,[3] until the wrongs he endured stamped on it an expression of gloomy ferocity. He had always

[1] Sappington, Tomlinson, and Baker were the names of three of his fellow miscreants. See Jefferson MSS.

[2] At Greenbriar. See "Narrative of Captain John Stewart," an actor in the war, *Magazine of American History*, vol. I, p. 671.

[3] Loudon's "Indian Narratives," II, p. 223.

been the friend of the white man, and had been noted particularly for his kindness and gentleness to children. Up to this time he had lived at peace with the borderers, for though some of his kin had been massacred by them years before, he had forgiven the deed—perhaps not unmindful of the fact that others of his kin had been concerned in still more bloody massacres of the whites. A skilled marksman and mighty hunter, of commanding dignity, who treated all men with a grave courtesy that exacted the same treatment in return, he was greatly liked and respected by all the white hunters and frontiersmen whose friendship and respect were worth having; they admired him for his dexterity and prowess, and they loved him for his straightforward honesty, and his noble loyalty to his friends. One of these old pioneer hunters has left on record[1] the statement that he deemed "Logan the best specimen of humanity he ever met with, either white or red." Such was Logan before the evil days came upon him.

Early in the spring the outlying settlers began again to suffer from the deeds of straggling Indians. Horses were stolen, one or two murders were committed, the inhabitants of the more lonely cabins fled to the forts, and the backwoodsmen began to threaten fierce vengeance. On April 16th, three traders in the employ of a man named Butler were attacked by some of the outlaw Cherokees, one killed, another wounded, and their goods plundered. Immediately after this Conolly issued an open letter, commanding the backwoodsmen to hold themselves in readiness to repel any attack by the Indians, as the Shawnees were hostile. Such a letter from Lord Dunmore's lieutenant amounted to a declaration of war, and there were sure to be plenty of back-

[1] See "American Pioneer," I, p. 189.

woodsmen who would put a very liberal interpretation upon the order given them to repel an attack. Its effects were seen instantly. All the borderers prepared for war. Cresap was near Wheeling at the time, with a band of hunters and scouts—fearless men, who had adopted many of the ways of the redskins, in addition to their method of fighting. As soon as they received Conolly's letter they proceeded to declare war in the regular Indian style, calling a council, planting the war-post, and going through other savage ceremonies,[1] and eagerly waited for a chance to attack their foes.

Unfortunately the first stroke fell on friendly Indians. The trader, Butler, spoken of above, in order to recover some of the peltries of which he had been robbed by the Cherokees, had sent a canoe with two friendly Shawnees toward the place of the massacre. On the 27th, Cresap and his followers ambushed these men near Captina, and killed and scalped them. Some of the better backwoodsmen strongly protested against this outrage;[2] but the mass of them were excited and angered by the rumor of Indian hostilities, and the brutal and disorderly side of frontier character was for the moment uppermost. They threatened to kill whoever interfered with them, cursing the "damned traders" as being worse than the Indians,[3] while Cresap boasted of the murder and never said a word in condemnation of the still worse deeds that followed it.[4] The next day he again led out his men and attacked another party of Shawnees, who had

[1] Letter of George Rogers Clark, June 17, 1798. In Jefferson MSS., 5th Series, vol. I (preserved in Archives of State Department at Washington).

[2] Witness the testimony of one of the most gallant Indian fighters of the border, who was in Wheeling at the time; letter of Colonel Ebenezer Zane, February 4, 1800, in Jefferson MSS.

[3] Jefferson MSS. Deposition of John Gibson, April 4, 1800.

[4] *Ibid.* Deposition of William Huston, April 19, 1798; also depositions of Samuel McKee, etc.

been trading near Pittsburg, killed one and wounded two others, one of the whites being also hurt.[1]

Among the men who were with Cresap at this time was a young Virginian, who afterward played a brilliant part in the history of the West, who was for ten years the leader of the bold spirits of Kentucky, and who rendered the whole United States signal and effective service by one of his deeds in the Revolutionary War. This was George Rogers Clark, then twenty-one years old.[2] He was of good family, and had been fairly well educated, as education went in colonial days; but from his childhood he had been passionately fond of the wild roving life of the woods. He was a great hunter; and, like so many other young colonial gentlemen of good birth and bringing-up and adventurous temper, he followed the hazardous profession of a backwoods surveyor. With chain and compass, as well as axe and rifle, he penetrated the far places of the wilderness, the lonely, dangerous regions where every weak man inevitably succumbed to the manifold perils encountered, but where the strong and far-seeing were able to lay the foundations of fame and fortune. He possessed high daring, unflinching courage, passions which he could not control, and a frame fitted to stand any strain of fatigue or hardship. He was a square-built, thick-set man, with high, broad forehead, sandy hair, and unquailing blue eyes that looked out from under heavy, shaggy brows.[3]

Clark had taken part with Cresap in his assault upon

[1] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, p. 468. Letter of Devereux Smith, June 10, 1774. Gibson's letter. Also Jefferson MSS.

[2] *Historical Magazine*, I, p. 168. Born in Albemarle County, Va., November 19, 1752.

[3] "Military Journal of Major Ebenezer Denny," with an introductory memoir by William H. Denny (Publication of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania), Philadelphia, 1860, p. 216.

the second party of Shawnees. On the following day the whole band of whites prepared to march off and attack Logan's camp at Yellow Creek, some fifty miles distant. After going some miles they began to feel ashamed of their mission; calling a halt, they discussed the fact that the camp they were preparing to attack consisted exclusively of friendly Indians, and mainly of women and children; and forthwith abandoned their proposed trip and returned home. They were true borderers—brave, self-reliant, loyal to their friends, and good-hearted when their worst instincts were not suddenly aroused; but the sight of bloodshed maddened them as if they had been so many wolves. Wrongs stirred to the depths their moody tempers and filled them with a brutal longing for indiscriminate revenge. When goaded by memories of evil, or when swayed by swift, fitful gusts of fury, the uncontrolled violence of their passions led them to commit deeds whose inhuman barbarity almost equalled, though it could never surpass, that shown by the Indians themselves.[1]

But Logan's people did not profit by Cresap's change of heart. On the last day of April a small party of men, women, and children, including almost all of Logan's kin, left his camp and crossed the river to visit Greathouse, as had been their custom; for he made a trade of selling rum to the savages, though Cresap had notified him to stop. The whole party were plied with

[1] The Cresap apologists, including even Brantz Mayer, dwell on Cresap's nobleness in *not* massacring Logan's family! It was certainly to his credit that he did not do so, but it does not speak very well for him that he should have even entertained the thought. He was doubtless, on the whole, a brave, good-hearted man—quite as good as the average borderer; but nevertheless apt to be drawn into deeds that were the reverse of creditable. Mayer's book has merit; but he certainly paints Logan too black and Cresap too white, and (see Note III, p. 232) is utterly wrong as to Logan's speech. He is right in recognizing the fact that in the war, as a whole, justice was on the side of the frontiersmen.

liquor and became helplessly drunk, in which condition Greathouse and his associated criminals fell on and massacred them, nine souls in all.[1] It was an inhuman and revolting deed, which should consign the names of the perpetrators to eternal infamy.

At once the frontier was in a blaze, and the Indians girded themselves for revenge. The Mingos sent out runners to the other tribes, telling of the butchery, and calling on all the red men to join together for immediate and bloody vengeance.[2] They confused the two massacres, attributing both to Cresap, whom they well knew as a warrior;[3] and their women for long afterward scared the children into silence by threatening them with Cresap's name as with that of a monster.[4] They had indeed been brutally wronged; yet it must be remembered that they themselves were the first aggressors. They had causelessly murdered and robbed many whites, and now their sins had recoiled on the heads of the innocent of their own race. The conflict could not in any event have been delayed long; the frontiersmen were too deeply and too justly irritated. These particular massacres, however discreditable to those taking part in them, were the occasions, not the causes, of the war; and though they cast a dark shade on the conduct of the whites, they do not relieve the red men from the charge of having committed earlier, more cruel, and quite as wanton outrages.

[1] Devereux Smith's letter. Some of the evil-doers afterward tried to palliate their misdeeds by stating that Logan's brother, when drunk, insulted a white man, and that the other Indians were at the time on the point of executing an attack upon them. The last statement is self-evidently false; for had such been the case, the Indians would, of course, never have let some of their women and children put themselves in the power of the whites, and get helplessly drunk; and, anyhow, the allegations of such brutal and cowardly murderers are entirely unworthy of acceptance, unless backed up by outside evidence.

[2] Jefferson MSS., 5th Series, vol. I, Heckewelder's letter.

[3] Jefferson MSS. Deposition of Colonel James Smith, May 25, 1798.

[4] *Ibid.*, Heckewelder's letter.

Conolly, an irritable but irresolute man, was appalled by the storm he had helped raise. He meanly disclaimed all responsibility for Cresap's action,[1] and deposed him from his command of rangers; to which, however, he was soon restored by Lord Dunmore. Both the earl and his lieutenant, however, united in censuring severely Greathouse's deed.[2] Conolly, throughout May, held a series of councils with the Delawares and Iroquois, in which he disclaimed and regretted the outrages and sought for peace.[3] To one of these councils the Delaware chief, Killbuck, with other warriors, sent a "talk," or "speech in writing,"[4] disavowing the deeds of one of their own parties of young braves, who had gone on the war-path; and another Delaware chief made a very sensible speech, saying that it was unfortunately inevitable that bad men on both sides should commit wrongs, and that the cooler heads should not be led away by acts due to the rashness and folly of a few. But the Shawnees showed no such spirit. On the contrary, they declared for war outright, and sent a bold defiance to the Virginians, at the same time telling Conolly plainly that he lied. Their message is noteworthy, because, after expressing a firm belief that the Virginian leader could control his warriors and stop the outrages if he wished, it added that the Shawnee head men were able to do the like with their own men when they required it. This last allegation took away all shadow of excuse from the Shawnees for not having stopped the excesses of which their young braves had been guilty during the past few years.

Though Conolly showed signs of flinching, his master the earl had evidently no thought of shrinking from

[1] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, p. 475.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1015. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 475. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 418.

the contest. He at once began actively to prepare to attack his foes, and the Virginians backed him up heartily, though the Royal Government, instead of supporting him, censured him in strong terms, and accused the whites of being the real aggressors and the authors of the war.[1]

In any event, it would have been out of the question to avoid a contest at so late a date. Immediately after the murders in the end of April, the savages crossed the frontier in small bands. Soon all the back country was involved in the unspeakable horrors of a bloody Indian war, with its usual accompaniments of burning houses, tortured prisoners, and ruined families; the men being killed and the women and children driven off to a horrible captivity.[2] The Indians declared that they were not at war with Pennsylvania,[3] and the latter in turn adopted an attitude of neutrality, openly disclaiming any share in the wrong that had been done, and assuring the Indians that it rested solely on the shoulders of the Virginians.[4] Indeed, the Shawnees protected the Pennsylvania traders from some hostile Mingos, while the Pennsylvania militia shielded a party of Shawnees from some of Conolly's men;[5] and the Virginians, irritated by what they considered an abandonment of the white cause, were bent on destroying the Pennsylvania fur trade with the Indians.[6] Nevertheless, some of the bands of young braves who were out on the war-path failed to discriminate between white friends and foes,

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 774. Letter of the Earl of Dartmouth, September 10, 1774. A sufficient answer, by the way, to the absurd charge that Dunmore brought on the war in consequence of some mysterious plan of the Home Government to embroil the Americans with the savages. It is not at all improbable that the Crown advisers were not particularly displeased at seeing the attention of the Americans distracted by a war with the Indians; but this is the utmost that can be alleged.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 808. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 478. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 506.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 474. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 549.

and a number of Pennsylvanians fell victims to their desire for scalps and their ignorance or indifference as to whom they were at war with.[1]

The panic along the Pennsylvania frontier was terrible; the out settlers fled back to the interior across the mountains, or gathered in numbers to defend themselves.[2] On the Virginian frontier, where the real attack was delivered, the panic was more justifiable; for terrible ravages were committed, and the inhabitants were forced to gather together in their forted villages and could no longer cultivate their farms, except by stealth.[3] Instead of being cowed, however, the backwoodsmen clamored to be led against their foes, and made most urgent appeals for powder and lead, of which there was a great scarcity.[4]

The confusion was heightened by the anarchy in which the government of the northwestern district had been thrown in consequence of the quarrel concerning the jurisdiction. The inhabitants were doubtful as to which colony really had a right to their allegiance, and many of the frontier officials were known to be double-faced, professing allegiance to both governments.[5] When the Pennsylvanians raised a corps of a hundred rangers there almost ensued a civil war among the whites, for the Virginians were fearful that the movement was really aimed against them.[6] Of course, the march of events gradually forced most, even of the neutral Indians, to join their brethren who had gone on the war-path, and as an example of the utter confusion that reigned, the very Indians that were at war with one British colony, Virginia, were still drawing supplies from the British post of Detroit.[7]

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 471. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 435, 467, 602. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 405, 707.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 808. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 677. [6] *Ibid.*, pp. 463, 467. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 684.

Logan's rage had been terrible. He had changed and not for the better, as he grew older, becoming a sombre, moody man; worse than all, he had succumbed to the fire-water, the curse of his race. The horrible treachery and brutality of the assault wherein his kinsfolk were slain made him mad for revenge; every wolfish instinct in him came to the surface. He wreaked a terrible vengeance for his wrongs; but in true Indian fashion it fell, not on those who had caused them, but on others who were entirely innocent. Indeed, he did not know he had caused them. The massacres at Captina and Yellow Creek occurred so near together that they were confounded with each other; and not only the Indians but many whites as well,[1] credited Cresap and Greathouse with being jointly responsible for both, and as Cresap was the most prominent, he was the one especially singled out for hatred.

Logan instantly fell on the settlement with a small band of Mingo warriors. On his first foray he took thirteen scalps, among them those of six children.[2] A party of Virginians, under a man named McClure, followed him; but he ambushed and defeated them, slaying their leader.[3] He repeated these forays at least three times. Yet, in spite of his fierce craving for revenge, he still showed many of the traits that had made him beloved of his white friends. Having taken a prisoner, he refused to allow him to be tortured, and saved his life at the risk of his own. A few days afterward he suddenly appeared to this prisoner with some gunpowder ink, and dictated to him a note. On his next expedition this note, tied to a war-club, was left in the house of a settler, whose entire family was murdered. It was a short document, written with ferocious

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 435. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 468, 546. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 470.

directness, as a kind of public challenge or taunt to the man whom he wrongly deemed to be the author of his misfortunes. It ran as follows:

"Captain Cresap:

"What did you kill my people on Yellow Creek for? The white people killed my kin at Conestoga, a great while ago, and I thought nothing of that. But you killed my kin again on Yellow Creek, and took my cousin prisoner. Then I thought I must kill too; and I have been three times to war since; but the Indians are not angry, only myself.

"Captain John Logan.

"July 21, 1774." [1]

There is a certain deliberate and bloodthirsty earnestness about this letter which must have shown the whites clearly, if they still needed to be shown, what bitter cause they had to rue the wrongs that had been done to Logan.

The Shawnees and Mingos were soon joined by many of the Delawares and outlying Iroquois, especially Senecas; as well as by the Wyandots and by large bands of ardent young warriors from among the Algonquin tribes along the Miami, the Wabash, and the Lakes. Their inroads on the settlements were characterized, as usual, by extreme stealth and merciless ferocity. They stole out of the woods with the silent cunning of wild beasts, and ravaged with a cruelty ten times greater. They burned down the lonely log huts, ambushed travellers, shot the men as they hunted or tilled the soil, ripped open the women with child, and burned

[1] Jefferson MSS. Deposition of Wm. Robinson, February 28, 1800, and letter from Harry Innes, March 2, 1799, with a copy of Logan's letter as made in his notebook at the time.

many of their captives at the stake. Their noiseless approach enabled them to fall on the settlers before their presence was suspected; and they disappeared as suddenly as they had come, leaving no trail that could be followed. The charred huts and scalped and mangled bodies of their victims were left as ghastly reminders of their visit, the sight stirring the backwoodsmen to a frenzy of rage all the more terrible in the end, because it was impotent for the time being. Generally, they made their escape successfully; occasionally, they were beaten off or overtaken and killed or scattered.

When they met armed woodsmen the fight was always desperate. In May, a party of hunters and surveyors, being suddenly attacked in the forest, beat off their assailants and took eight scalps, though with a loss of nine of their own number.[1] Moreover, the settlers began to band together to make retaliatory inroads; and while Lord Dunmore was busily preparing to strike a really effective blow, he directed the frontiersmen of the Northwest to undertake a foray, so as to keep the Indians employed. Accordingly, they gathered together, four hundred strong,[2] crossed the Ohio in the end of July, and marched against a Shawnee town on the Muskingum. They had a brisk skirmish with the Shawnees, drove them back, and took five scalps, losing two men killed and five wounded. Then the Shawnees tried to ambush them, but their ambush was discovered and they promptly fled, after a slight skirmish, in which no one was killed but one Indian, whom Cresap, a very active and vigorous man, ran down and slew with his tomahawk.[3] The Shawnee village was burned, seventy

[1] "American Archives," p. 373.

[2] Under a certain Angus MacDonald—*ibid.*, p. 722. They crossed the Ohio at Fish Creek, 120 miles below Pittsburg.

[3] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, pp. 682, 684.

acres of standing corn were cut down, and the settlers returned in triumph. On the march back they passed through the towns of the peaceful Moravian Delawares, to whom they did no harm.

CHAPTER IX

THE BATTLE OF THE GREAT KANAWHA; AND LOGAN'S SPEECH

1774

MEANWHILE Lord Dunmore, having garrisoned the frontier forts, three of which were put under the orders of Daniel Boone, was making ready a formidable army with which to overwhelm the hostile Indians. It was to be raised, and to march, in two wings or divisions, each fifteen hundred strong, which were to join at the mouth of the Great Kanawha. One wing, the right or northernmost, was to be commanded by the earl in person; while the other, composed exclusively of frontiersmen living among the mountains west and southwest of the Blue Ridge, was intrusted to General Andrew Lewis. Lewis was a stalwart backwoods soldier, belonging to a family of famous frontier fighters, but, though a sternly just and fearless man,[1] he does not appear to have had more than average qualifications to act as a commander of border troops when pitted against Indians.

The backwoodsmen of the Alleghanies felt that the quarrel was their own; in their hearts the desire for revenge burned like a sullen flame. The old men had passed their manhood with nerves tense from the strain of unending watchfulness, and souls embittered by terrible and repeated disasters; the young men had been cradled in stockaded forts, round which there prowled a foe whose comings and goings were unknown, and who

[1] Stewart's "Narrative."

was unseen till the moment when the weight of his hand was felt. They had been helpless to avenge their wrongs, and now that there was at last a chance to do so, they thronged eagerly to Lewis's standard. The left wing or army assembled at the Great Levels of Greenbriar, and thither came the heroes of long rifle, tomahawk, and hunting-shirt, gathering from every stockaded hamlet, every lonely clearing and smoky hunter's camp that lay along the ridges from whose hollows sprang the sources of the Eastern and Western waters. They were not uniformed, save that they all wore the garb of the frontier hunter; but most of them were armed with good rifles and were skilful woodsmen, and, though utterly undisciplined, they were magnificent individual fighters.[1] The officers were clad and armed almost precisely like the rank and file, save that some of them had long swords girded to their waist-belts; they carried rifles, for, where the result of the contest depended mainly on the personal prowess of the individual fighter, the leader was expected literally to stand in the forefront of the battle, and to inspirit his followers by deeds as well as words.

Among these troops was a company of rangers who came from the scattered wooden forts of the Watauga and the Nolichucky. Both Sevier and Robertson took part in this war, and though the former saw no fighting, the latter, who had the rank of sergeant, was more fortunate.

While the backwoods general was mustering his unruly and turbulent host of skilled riflemen, the English earl led his own levies, some fifteen hundred strong, to Fort Pitt.[2] Here he changed his plans, and decided not

[1] "American Archives." Colonel William Preston's letter, September 28, 1774.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 872.

to try to join the other division, as he had agreed to do. This sudden abandonment of a scheme already agreed to and acted on by his colleague was certainly improper, and, indeed, none of the earl's movements indicated very much military capacity. However, he descended the Ohio River with a flotilla of a hundred canoes, besides keel-boats and pirogues,[1] to the mouth of the Hockhocking, where he built and garrisoned a small stockade. Then he went up the Hockhocking to the falls, whence he marched to the Scioto, and there intrenched himself in a fortified camp, with breastworks of fallen trees, on the edge of the Pickaway plains, not far from the Indian town of old Chillicothe. Thence he sent out detachments that destroyed certain of the hostile towns. He had with him as scouts many men famous in frontier story, among them George Rogers Clark, Cresap, and Simon Kenton (afterward the bane of every neighboring Indian tribe, and renowned all along the border for his deeds of desperate prowess, his wonderful adventures, and his hairbreadth escapes). Another, of a very different stamp, was Simon Girty, of evil fame, whom the whole West grew to loathe, with bitter hatred, as "the white renegade." He was the son of a vicious Irish trader, who was killed by the Indians; he was adopted by the latter, and grew up among them, and his daring ferocity and unscrupulous cunning early made him one of their leaders.[2] At the moment he was serving Lord Dunmore and the whites; but he was by tastes, habits, and education a red man, who felt ill at ease among those of his own color. He soon returned to the Indians, and dwelt among them ever afterward, the most inveterate foe of the whites that was to be

[1] Doddridge, 235.
[2] See *Magazine of American History*, XV, 256.

found in all the tribes. He lived to be a very old man, and is said to have died fighting his ancient foes and kinsmen, the Americans, in our second war against the British.

But Lord Dunmore's army was not destined to strike the decisive blow in the contest. The great Shawnee chief, Cornstalk, was as wary and able as he was brave. He had from the first opposed the war with the whites;[1] but as he had been unable to prevent it, he was now bent on bringing it to a successful issue. He was greatly outnumbered; but he had at his command over a thousand painted and plumed warriors, the pick of the young men of the Western tribes, the most daring braves to be found between the Ohio and the Great Lakes. His foes were divided, and he determined to strike first at the one who would least suspect a blow, but whose ruin, nevertheless, would involve that of the other. If Lewis's army could be surprised and overwhelmed, the fate of Lord Dunmore's would be merely a question of days. So without delay, Cornstalk, crafty in counsel, mighty in battle, and swift to carry out what he had planned, led his long files of warriors, with noiseless speed, through leagues of trackless woodland to the banks of the Ohio.

The backwoodsmen who were to form the army of Lewis had begun to gather at the Levels of Greenbriar before the 1st of September, and by the 7th most of them were assembled. Altogether, the force under Lewis consisted of four commands, as follows: a body of Augusta troops, under Colonel Charles Lewis, a

[1] De Haas, p. 161. He is a very fair and trustworthy writer; in particular, as regards Logan's speech and Cresap's conduct. It is to be regretted that Brantz Mayer, in dealing with these latter subjects, could not have approached them with the same desire to be absolutely impartial, instead of appearing to act solely as an advocate.

brother of the general;[1] a body of Botetourt troops, under Colonel William Fleming;[2] a small independent company, under Colonel John Field; and, finally, the Fincastle men, from the Holston, Clinch, Watauga, and New River[3] settlements, under Colonel William Christian.[4] One of Christian's captains was a stout old Marylander, of Welsh blood, named Evan Shelby; and Shelby's son Isaac,[5] a stalwart, stern-visaged young man, who afterward played a very prominent part on the border, was a subaltern in his company, in which Robertson likewise served as a sergeant. Although without experience in drill, it may be doubted if a braver or physically finer set of men were ever got together on this continent.[6]

Among such undisciplined troops it was inevitable that there should be both delay and insubordination. Nevertheless, they behaved a good deal better than their commander had expected; and he was much pleased with their cheerfulness and their eagerness for action. The Fincastle men, being from the remote settlements, were unable to get together in time to start with the others; and Colonel Field grew jealous of his commander and decided to march his little company alone. The Indians were hovering around the camp, and occasionally shot at and wounded stragglers, or attempted to drive off the pack-horses.

The army started in three divisions. The bulk, con-

[1] His eight captains were George Matthews, Alexander McClannahan, John Dickinson, John Lewis (son of William), Benjamin Harrison, William Paul, Joseph Haynes, and Samuel Wilson. Hale, "Trans-Alleghany Pioneers," p. 181.

[2] His seven captains were Matthew Arbuckle, John Murray, John Lewis (son of Andrew), James Robertson, Robert McClannahan, James Ward, and John Stewart (author of the "Narrative").

[3] As the Kanawha was sometimes called.

[4] Whose five captains were Evan Shelby, Russell, Herbert, Draper, and Buford.

[5] Born December 11, 1750, near Hagerstown, Md.

[6] Letter of Colonel William Preston, September 28, 1774. "American Archives."

sisting of Augusta men, under Colonel Charles Lewis, marched on September 8th, closely followed by the Botetourt troops under Andrew Lewis himself.[1] Field, with his small company, started off on his own account; but after being out a couple of days, two of his scouts met two Indians, with the result that a man was killed on each side; after which, profiting by the loss, he swallowed his pride and made haste to join the first division.

[1] Letter of one of Lord Dunmore's officers, November 21, 1774. "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, p. 1017. Hale gives a minute account of the route followed; Stewart says they started on the 11th.

With the journal of Floyd's expedition, mentioned on a previous page, I received MS. copies of two letters to Colonel William Preston, both dated at Camp Union, at the Great Levels; one of September 8th from Colonel Andrew Lewis, and one of September 7th (9th?) from Colonel William Christian.

Colonel Lewis's letter runs in part: "From Augusta we have 600; of this county [Botetourt] about 400; Major Field is joined with 40. . . . I have had less Trouble with the Troops than I expected. . . . I received a letter from his Lordship last Sunday morning which was dated the 30th of August at Old Towns, which I take to be Chresops; he then I am told had Colonel Stephens and Major Conolly at his Elbow as might easily be discovered by the Contents of his letter which expressed his Lordship's warmest wishes that I would with all the troops from this Quarter join him at the mouth of the little Kanaway; I wrote his Lordship that it was not in my power to alter our rout. . . . The Indians wounded a man within two miles of us . . . and wounded another; from this we may expect they will be picking about us all the March." He states that he has more men than he expected, and will therefore need more provisions, and that he will leave some of his poorest troops to garrison the small fort.

Colonel Christian's letter states that the Augusta men took with them 400 pack-horses, carrying 54,000 pounds of flour, and 108 beeves; they started "yesterday"; Field marched "this evening"; Fleming and his 450 Botetourt men, with 200 pack-horses, "are going next Monday." Field had brought word that Dunmore expected to be at the mouth of the Great Kanawha "some days after the 20th." Some Indians had tried to steal a number of pack-horses, but had been discovered and frightened off.

Christian was very much discontented at being bidden to stay behind until he could gather 300 men, and bring up the rear; he expresses his fear that his men will be much exasperated when they learn that they are to stay behind, and reiterates: "I would not for all I am worth be behind crossing the Ohio and that we should miss lending our assistance." Field brought an account of MacDonald's fight (see *ante*, p. 201, vol. I); he said the whites were 400 and the Indians but 30 strong, that the former had four men killed and six wounded; the Indians but three or four killed and one captured, and their town was burnt. The number of the Shawnees and their allies was estimated at 1,200 warriors that could be put into one battle. The 400 horses that had started with the Augusta men were to return as fast as they could (after reaching the embarkment point, whence the flour was carried in canoes).

The Fincastle troops were delayed so long that most of them, with their commander, were still fifteen miles from the main body the day the battle was fought; but Captains Shelby and Russell, with parts of their companies, went on ahead of the others, and, as will be seen, joined Lewis in time to do their full share of the fighting. Colonel Christian himself only reached the Levels on the afternoon of the day the Augusta men had marched. He was burning with desire to distinguish himself, and his men were also very eager to have a share in the battle; and he besought Lewis to let him go along with what troops he had. But he was refused permission, whereat he was greatly put out.

Lewis found he had more men than he expected, and so left some of the worst troops to garrison the small forts. Just before starting, he received a letter from the earl advising, but not commanding, a change in their plans; to this he refused to accede, and was rather displeased at the proposal, attributing it to the influence of Conolly, whom the backwoods leaders were growing to distrust. There is not the slightest reason to suppose, however, that he then, or at any time during the campaign, suspected the earl of treachery; nor did the latter's conduct give any good ground for such a belief. Nevertheless, this view gained credit among the Virginians in later years, when they were greatly angered by the folly and ferocity of Lord Dunmore's conduct during the early part of the Revolutionary War, and looked at all his past acts with jaundiced eyes.[1]

[1] When the Revolutionary War broke out, the earl not only fought the revolted colonists with all legitimate weapons, but tried to incite the blacks to servile insurrection, and sent agents to bring his old foes, the red men of the forest, down on his old friends, the settlers. He encouraged piratical and plundering raids, and on the other hand failed to show the courage and daring that are sometimes partial offsets to ferocity. But in this war, in 1774, he conducted himself with great energy in making preparations, and showed considerable skill as a negotiator in conclud-

Lewis's troops formed a typical backwoods army, both officers and soldiers. They wore fringed hunting-shirts, dyed yellow, brown, white, and even red; quaintly carved shot-bags and powder-horns hung from their broad ornamented belts; they had fur caps or soft hats, moccasins, and coarse woollen leggings reaching half-way up the thigh.[1] Each carried his flint-lock, his tomahawk, and scalping-knife. They marched in long files with scouts or spies thrown out in front and on the flanks, while axemen went in advance to clear a trail over which they could drive the beef-cattle and the pack-horses, laden with provisions, blankets, and ammunition. They struck out straight through the trackless wilderness, making their road as they went, until on the 21st of the month[2] they reached the Kanawha, at the mouth of Elk Creek. Here they halted to build dugout canoes; and about this time were overtaken by the companies of Russell and Shelby. On October 1st[3] they started to descend the river in twenty-seven canoes, a portion of the army marching down along the Indian trail, which followed the base of the hills, instead of the river-bank, as it was thus easier to cross the heads of the creeks and ravines.[4]

They reached the mouth of the river on the 6th,[5] and camped on Point Pleasant, the cape of land jutting

ing the peace, and apparently went into the conflict with hearty zest and goodwill. He was evidently much influenced by Conolly, a very weak adviser, however; and his whole course betrayed much vacillation and no generalship.

[1] Smyth's "Tour," II, p. 179. [2] "American Archives," p. 1017.

[3] *Ibid.* Stewart says they reached the mouth of the Kanawha on October 1st; another account says September 30th; but this is an error, as shown both by the "American Archives" and by the Campbell MSS.

[4] Hale, 182.

[5] Campbell MSS. Letter of Isaac Shelby to John Shelby, October 16, 1774. A portion of this letter, unsigned, was printed in "American Archives," p. 1016, and in various newspapers (even at Belfast; see Hale, p. 187, who thinks it was written by Captain Arbuckle). As it is worth preserving and has never been printed in full, I give it in Note I, p. 226.

out between the Ohio and the Kanawha. As a consequence the bloody fight that ensued is sometimes called the battle of Point Pleasant, and sometimes the battle of the Great Kanawha. Hitherto the Indians had not seriously molested Lewis's men, though they killed a settler right on their line of march, and managed to drive off some of the bullocks and pack-horses.[1]

The troops, though tired from their journey, were in good spirits and eager to fight. But they were impatient of control, and were murmuring angrily that there was favoritism shown in the issue of beef. Hearing this, Lewis ordered all the poorest beeves to be killed first; but this merely produced an explosion of discontent, and large numbers of the men, in mutinous defiance of the orders of their officers, began to range the woods, in couples, to kill game. There was little order in the camp,[2] and small attention was paid to picket and sentinel duty; the army, like a body of Indian warriors, relying for safety mainly upon the sharp-sighted watchfulness of the individual members and the activity of the hunting-parties.

On the 9th, Simon Girty[3] arrived in camp, bringing a message from Lord Dunmore, which bade Lewis meet him at the Indian towns near the Pickaway plains. Lewis was by no means pleased at the change, but

[1] Stewart's "Narrative."

[2] Smyth, II, p. 158. He claims to have played a prominent part in the battle. This is certainly not so, and he may not have been present at all; at least Colonel Stewart, who was there and was acquainted with every one of note in the army, asserts positively that there was no such man along; nor has any other American account ever mentioned him. His military knowledge was nil, as may be gathered from his remark, made when the defeats of Braddock and Grant were still recent, that British regulars with the bayonet were best fitted to oppose Indians.

[3] Some accounts say that he was accompanied by Kenton and McCulloch; others state that no messenger arrived until after the battle. But this is certainly wrong. Shelby's letter shows that the troops learned the governor's change of plans before the battle.

nevertheless prepared to break camp and march next morning. He had with him at this time about eleven hundred men.[1]

His plans, however, were destined to be rudely forestalled, for Cornstalk, coming rapidly through the forest, had reached the Ohio. That very night the Indian chief ferried his men across the river on rafts, six or eight miles above the forks,[2] and by dawn was on the point of hurling his whole force, of nearly a thousand warriors,[3] on the camp of his slumbering foes.

Before daylight on the 10th, small parties of hunters had, as usual, left Lewis's camp. Two of these men, from Russell's company, after having gone somewhat over a mile, came upon a large party of Indians; one was killed, and the survivor ran back at full speed to give the alarm, telling those in camp that he had seen five acres of ground covered with Indians as thick as they could stand.[4]

Almost immediately afterward two men of Shelby's company, one being no less a person than Robertson himself and the other, Valentine, a brother of John Sevier, also stumbled upon the advancing Indians;

[1] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, p. 1017; and was joined by Colonel Christian's three hundred the day after the battle.

[2] Campbell MSS. Letter of Colonel William Preston (presumably to Patrick Henry), October 31, 1774. As it is interesting and has never been published, we give it in Note, II, p. 230.

[3] Many of the white accounts make their number much greater, without any authority; Shelby estimates it at between eight hundred and one thousand. Smith, who generally gives the Indian side, says that on this occasion they were nearly as numerous as the whites. Smyth, who bitterly hates the Americans, and always belittles their deeds, puts the number of Indians at nine hundred; he would certainly make it as small as possible. So the above estimate is probably pretty near the truth, though it is, of course, impossible to be accurate. At any rate, it was the only important engagement fought by the English or Americans against the northwestern Indians in which there was a near approach to equality of force.

[4] Campbell MSS. Shelby's letter. Their names were Mooney and Hickman; the latter was killed. Most historians have confused these two men with the two others who discovered the Indians at almost the same time.

being very wary and active men, they both escaped and reached camp almost as soon as the other.

Instantly the drums beat to arms,[1] and the backwoodsmen—lying out in the open, rolled in their bankets—started from the ground, looked to their flints and priming, and were ready on the moment. The general, thinking he had only a scouting-party to deal with, ordered out Colonel Charles Lewis and Colonel Fleming, each with one hundred and fifty men. Fleming had the left and marched up the bank of the Ohio; while Lewis, on the right, kept some little distance inland. They went about half a mile.[2] Then, just before sunrise, while it was still dusk, the men in camp, eagerly listening, heard the reports of three guns, immediately succeeded by a clash like a peal of thin thunder, as hundreds of rifles rang out together. It was evident that the attack was serious and Colonel Field was at once despatched to the front with two hundred men.[3]

He came only just in time. At the first fire both of the scouts in front of the white line had been killed. The attack fell first, and with especial fury, on the division of Charles Lewis, who himself was mortally wounded at the very outset; he had not taken a tree,[4] but was in an open piece of ground, cheering on his men when he was shot. He stayed with them until the line was formed, and then walked back to camp unassisted, giving his gun to a man who was near him. His men, who were drawn up on the high ground skirting Crooked Run,[5] began to waver, but were rallied by Fleming,

[1] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, p. 1017.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1017. Letter from Stanton, Va., November 4, 1774, says three-quarters of a mile; Shelby says one-quarter of a mile.

[3] *Ibid.*, Letter of November 17th.

[4] The frontier expression for covering oneself behind a tree trunk.

[5] A small stream running into the Kanawha near its mouth. De Haas, p. 151.

whose division had been attacked almost simultaneously, until he, too, was struck down by a bullet. The line then gave way, except that some of Fleming's men still held their own on the left in a patch of rugged ground near the Ohio. At this moment, however, Colonel Field came up and restored the battle, while the backwoodsmen who had been left in camp also began to hurry up to take part in the fight. General Lewis at last, fully awake to the danger, began to fortify the camp by felling timber so as to form a breastwork running across the point from the Ohio to the Kanawha. This work should have been done before; and through attending to it Lewis was unable to take any personal part in the battle.

Meanwhile, the frontiersmen began to push back their foes, led by Colonel Field. The latter himself, however, was soon slain; he was at the time behind a great tree, and was shot by two Indians on his right, while he was trying to get a shot at another on his left, who was distracting his attention by mocking and jeering at him.[1] The command then fell on Captain Evan Shelby, who turned his company over to the charge of his son Isaac. The troops fought on steadily, undaunted by the fall of their leaders, while the Indians attacked with the utmost skill, caution, and bravery. The fight was a succession of single combats, each man sheltering himself behind a stump, or rock, or tree trunk, the superiority of the backwoodsmen in the use of the rifle being offset by the superiority of their foes in the art of hiding and of shielding themselves from harm. The hostile lines, though about a mile and a quarter in length, were so close together, being never more than twenty yards apart, that many of the combatants

[1] Campbell MSS. Preston's letter.

grappled in hand-to-hand fighting, and tomahawked or stabbed each other[1] to death. The clatter of the rifles was incessant, while above the din could be heard the cries and groans of the wounded and the shouts of the combatants, as each encouraged his own side or jeered savagely at his adversaries. The cheers of the whites mingled with the appalling war-whoops and yells of their foes. The Indians also called out to the Americans in broken English, taunting them, and asking them why their fifes were no longer whistling—for the fight was far too close to permit of any such music. Their head men walked up and down behind their warriors, exhorting them to go in close, to shoot straight, and to bear themselves well in the fight;[2] while throughout the action the whites opposite Cornstalk could hear his deep, sonorous voice as he cheered on his braves and bade them "be strong, be strong." [3]

About noon the Indians tried to get round the flank of the whites into their camp; but this movement was repulsed, and a party of the Americans[4] followed up their advantage, and running along the banks of the Kanawha, outflanked the enemy in turn. The Indians, being pushed very hard, now began to fall back, the best fighters covering the retreat while the wounded were being carried off; although—a rare thing in Indian battles—they were pressed so close that they were able to bear away but a portion of their dead. The whites were forced to pursue with the greatest caution; for those of them who advanced heedlessly were certain to be ambushed and receive a smart check. Finally, about one o'clock, the Indians, in their retreat, reached a very

[1] "American Archives." Letter of November 4, 1774.
[2] Campbell MSS. Preston's letter. [3] Stewart's "Narrative."
[4] Led by Isaac Shelby, James Stewart, and George Matthews.

strong position, where the underbrush was very close and there were many fallen logs and steep banks. Here they stood resolutely at bay, and the whites did not dare attack them in such a stronghold. So the action came almost to an end; though skirmishing went on until about an hour before sunset, the Indians still at times taunting their foes and calling out to them that they had eleven hundred men as well as the whites, and that to-morrow they were going to be two thousand strong.[1] This was only bravado, however; they had suffered too heavily to renew the attack, and under cover of darkness they slipped away and made a most skilful retreat, carrying all their wounded in safety across the Ohio. The exhausted Americans, having taken a number of scalps, as well as forty guns and many tomahawks[2] and some other plunder,[3] returned to their camp.

The battle had been bloody as well as stubborn. The whites, though the victors, had suffered more than their foes, and, indeed, had won only because it was against the entire policy of Indian warfare to suffer a severe loss, even if a victory could be gained thereby. Of the whites, some seventy-five men had been killed or mortally wounded, and one hundred and forty severely or slightly wounded,[4] so that they lost a fifth of

[1] Campbell MSS. Preston's letter.

[2] "American Archives." Letter of November 4, 1774. It is doubtful if Logan was in this fight; the story about Cornstalk killing one of his men who flinched may or may not be true.

[3] Hale, 199; the plunder was afterward sold at auction for £74 4*s.* 6*d.*

[4] These are the numbers given by Stewart; but the accounts vary greatly. Monette ("Valley of the Mississippi") says 87 killed and 141 wounded. The letters written at the time evidently take no account of any but the badly wounded. Shelby thus makes the killed 55 and the wounded (including the mortally hurt) 68. Another account ("American Archives," p. 1017) says 40 men killed and 96 wounded, 20 odd of whom were since dead; whilst a foot-note to this letter enumerates 53 dead outright and 87 wounded, "some of whom have since died." It is evidently impossible that the slightly wounded are included in these lists; and in all probability Stewart's account is correct, as he was an eye-witness and participant.

their whole number. The Indians had not lost much more than half as many; about forty warriors were killed outright or died of their wounds.[1] Among the Indians no chief of importance was slain; whereas the Americans had seventeen officers killed or wounded, and lost in succession their second, third, and fourth in command. The victors buried their own dead and left the bodies of the vanquished to the wolves and ravens. At midnight, after the battle, Colonel Christian and his Fincastle men reached the ground.

The battle of the Great Kanawha was a purely American victory, for it was fought solely by the backwoodsmen themselves. Their immense superiority over regular troops in such contests can be readily seen when their triumph on this occasion is compared with the defeats previously suffered by Braddock's grenadiers and Grant's highlanders at the hands of the same foes. It was purely a soldiers' battle, won by hard individual fighting; there was no display of generalship, except on Cornstalk's part.[2] It was the most closely contested of any battle ever fought with the northwestern Indians, and it was the only victory gained over a large body of them by a force but slightly superior in numbers.[3]

[1] Twenty-one were scalped on the field; the bodies of 12 more were afterward found behind logs or in holes where they had been lain, and 8 eventually died of their wounds (see "American Archives," Smith, Hale, De Haas, etc.). Smith, who wrote from the Indian side, makes their loss only 28; but this apparently does not include the loss of the Western Indians, the allies of the Shawnees, Mingos, and Delawares.

[2] Smyth, the Englishman, accuses Lewis of cowardice, an accusation which deserves no more attention than do the similar accusations of treachery brought against Dunmore. Brantz Mayer speaks in very hyperbolic terms of the "relentless Lewis," and the "great slaughter" of the Indians.

[3] Wayne won an equally decisive victory, but he outnumbered his foes three to one. Bouquet, who was almost beaten and was saved by the provincial rangers, was greatly the superior in force, and suffered four times the loss he inflicted. In both cases, especially that of Bouquet, the account of the victor must be received with caution where it deals with the force and loss of the vanquished. In the same way Shelby and the other reporters of the Kanawha fight stated that the Indians lost more heavily than the whites.

Both because of the character of the fight itself, and because of the results that flowed from it, it is worthy of being held in especial remembrance.

Lewis left his sick and wounded in the camp at the Point, protected by a rude breastwork and with an adequate guard. With the remainder of his forces, over a thousand strong, he crossed the Ohio and pushed on to the Pickaway plains. When but a few miles from the earl's encampment he was met by a messenger informing him that a treaty of peace was being negotiated with the Indians.[1] The backwoodsmen, flushed with success and angry at their losses, were eager for more bloodshed; and it was only with difficulty that they were restrained and were finally induced to march homeward, the earl riding down to them and giving his orders in person. They grumbled angrily against the earl for sending them back, and in later days accused him of treachery for having done so; but his course was undoubtedly proper, for it would have been very difficult to conclude peace in the presence of such fierce and unruly auxiliaries.

The spirit of the Indians had been broken by their defeat. Their stern old chief, Cornstalk, alone remained with unshaken heart, resolute to bid defiance to his foes and to fight the war out to the bitter end. But when the council of the head men and war-chiefs was called, it became evident that his tribesmen would not fight,

[1] The stories of how Lewis suspected the earl of treachery, and of how the backwoodsmen were so exasperated that they wished to kill the latter, may have some foundation; but are quite as likely to be pure inventions, made up after the Revolutionary War. In De Haas, the "American Pioneer," etc., can be found all kinds of stories, some even told by members of the Clark and Lewis families, which are meant to criminate Dunmore, but which make such mistakes in chronology—placing the battle of Lexington in the year of the Kanawha fight, asserting that peace was not made till the following spring, etc.—that they must be dismissed offhand as entirely untrustworthy.

and even his burning eloquence could not goad the warriors into again trying the hazard of battle. They listened unmoved and in sullen silence to the thrilling and impassioned words with which he urged them to once more march against the Long Knives, and if necessary to kill their women and children, and then themselves die fighting to the last man. At last, when he saw he could not stir the hearts of his hearers, he struck his tomahawk into the war-post and announced that he himself would go and make peace. At that the warriors broke silence, and all grunted out approvingly "Ough! ough! ough!" and then they instantly sent runners to the earl's army to demand a truce.[1]

Accordingly, with all his fellow chiefs, he went to Lord Dunmore's camp, and there entered into a treaty. The crestfallen Indians assented to all the terms the conquerors proposed. They agreed to give up all the white prisoners and stolen horses in their possession, and to surrender all claim to the lands south of the Ohio, and they gave hostages as an earnest of their good faith.[2] But their chief spokesman, Cornstalk, while obliged to assent to these conditions, yet preserved through all the proceedings a bearing of proud defiance that showed how little the fear of personal consequences influenced his own actions. At the talks he addressed the white leader with vehement denunciation and reproach, in a tone that seemed rather that of a conqueror than of one of the conquered. Indeed, he himself was not conquered; he felt that his tribesmen were craven, but he knew that his own soul feared nothing. The Virginians, who, like their Indian antagonists,

[1] Stewart's "Narrative."

[2] "American Archives," 4th Series. St. Clair's letter, December 4, 1774. Also Jefferson MSS. Deposition of William Robinson, etc.

prized skill in oratory only less than skill in warfare, were greatly impressed by the chieftain's eloquence, by his command of words, his clear, distinct voice, his peculiar emphasis, and his singularly grand and majestic, and yet graceful, bearing; they afterward said that his oratory fully equalled that of Patrick Henry himself.[1]

Every prominent chief but one came to the council. The exception was Logan, who remained apart in the Mingo village, brooding over his wrongs and the vengeance he had taken. His fellows, when questioned about his absence, answered that he was like a mad dog whose bristles were still up, but that they were gradually falling; and when he was entreated to be present at the meeting he responded that he was a warrior, not a councillor, and would not come. The Mingos, because they failed to appear at the treaty, had their camp destroyed and were forced to give hostages, as the Delawares and Shawnees had done,[2] and Logan himself finally sullenly acquiesced in, or at least ceased openly to oppose, the peace.

But he would not come in person to Lord Dunmore; so the earl was obliged to communicate with him through a messenger, a frontier veteran[3] named John Gibson, who had long lived among the Indians and knew thoroughly both their speech and their manners.[4] To this messenger Logan was willing to talk. Taking him aside, he suddenly addressed him in a speech that will always retain its place as perhaps the finest out-

[1] See De Haas, 162.

[2] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, pp. 1013, 1226.

[3] John Gibson, afterward a general in the army of the United States. See Note, III, p. 232.

[4] Jefferson MSS. Statements of John Gibson, etc.; there is some uncertainty as to whether Logan came up to Gibson at the treaty and drew him aside, or whether the latter went to seek the former in his wigwam.

burst of savage eloquence of which we have any authentic record. The messenger took it down in writing, translating it literally,[1] and, returning to camp, gave it to Lord Dunmore. The earl then read it, in open council, to the whole backwoods army, including Cresap, Clark, and the other scouts. The speech, when read, proved to be no message of peace, nor an acknowledgment of defeat; but, instead, a strangely pathetic recital of his wrongs, and a fierce and exulting justification of the vengeance he had taken. It ran as follows:

"I appeal to any white man to say if ever he entered Logan's cabin hungry and he gave him not meat; if ever he came cold and naked and he clothed him not? During the course of the last long and bloody war, Logan remained idle in his camp, an advocate for peace. Such was my love for the whites that my countrymen pointed as I passed and said, 'Logan is the friend of the white man.' I had even thought to have lived with you, but for the injuries of one man. Colonel Cresap, the last spring, in cold blood and unprovoked, murdered all the relations of Logan, not even sparing my women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it. I have killed many. I have fully glutted my vengeance. For my country I rejoice at the beams of peace; but do not harbor a thought that mine is the joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one."

The tall frontiersmen, lounging in a circle roundabout, listened to the reading of the speech with eager interest;

[1] Jefferson Papers (State Department MSS.), 5–1–4. Statement of Colonel John Gibson to John Anderson, an Indian trader at Pittsburg, in 1774. Anderson had asked him if he had not himself added somewhat to the speech; he responded that he had not, that it was a literal translation or transcription of Logan's words.

rough Indian haters though they were, they were so much impressed by it that in the evening it was a common topic of conversation over their camp-fires, and they continually attempted to rehearse it to one another.[1] But they knew that Greathouse, not Cresap, had been the chief offender in the murder of Logan's family; and when the speech was read, Clark, turning round, jeered at and rallied Cresap as being so great a man that the Indians put everything on his shoulders; whereat, Cresap, much angered, swore that he had a good mind to tomahawk Greathouse for the murder.[2]

The speech could not have been very satisfactory to the earl; but at least it made it evident that Logan did not intend to remain on the war-path; and so Lord Dunmore marched home with his hostages. On the homeward march, near the mouth of the river Hockhocking, the officers of the army held a notable meeting. They had followed the British earl to battle; but they were Americans, in warm sympathy with the Continental Congress which was then in session. Fearful lest their countrymen might not know that they were at one with them in the struggle of which the shadow was looming up with ever-increasing blackness, they passed resolutions which were afterward published. Their speakers told how they had lived in the woods for three months without hearing from the Congress at Philadelphia, nor yet from Boston, where the disturbances seemed most likely to come to a head. They spoke of their fear lest their countrymen might be misled into the belief that this numerous body of armed men was hostile or indifferent to the cause of America; and proudly alluded

[1] Jefferson MSS. Affidavits of Andrew Rogers, William Russell, and others who were present.

[2] Clark's letter.

to the fact that they had lived so long without bread or salt, or shelter at night, and that the troops they led could march and fight as well as any in the world. In their resolutions they professed their devotion to their king, to the honor of his crown, and to the dignity of the British Empire; but they added that this devotion would only last while the king deigned to rule over a free people, for their love for the liberty of America outweighed all other considerations, and they would exert every power for its defense, not riotously, but when regularly called forth by the voice of their countrymen.

They ended by tendering their thanks to Lord Dunmore for his conduct. He was also warmly thanked by the Virginia legislature, as well as by the frontiersmen of Fincastle,[1] and he fully deserved their gratitude.

The war had been ended in less than six months' time; and its results were of the utmost importance. It had been very successful. In Braddock's war, the borderers are estimated to have suffered a loss of fifty souls for every Indian slain; in Pontiac's war, they had learned to defend themselves better, and yet the ratio was probably as ten to one;[2] whereas in this war, if we consider only males of fighting age, it is probable that a good deal more than half as many Indians as whites were killed, and even including women and children, the ratio would not rise to more than three to one. Certainly, in all the contests waged against the northwestern Indians during the last half of the eighteenth century there was no other where the whites inflicted so great a relative loss on their foes. Its results were

[1] See De Haas, 167.

[2] These are Smith's estimates, derived largely from Indian sources. They are probably excessive, but not very greatly so.

most important. It kept the northwestern tribes quiet for the first two years of the Revolutionary struggle; and, above all, it rendered possible the settlement of Kentucky, and therefore the winning of the West. Had it not been for Lord Dunmore's war, it is more than likely that when the colonies achieved their freedom they would have found their western boundary fixed at the Alleghany Mountains.[1]

Nor must we permit our sympathy for the foul wrongs of the two great Indian heroes of the contest to blind us to the fact that the struggle was precipitated, in the first place, by the outrages of the red men, not the whites; and that the war was not only inevitable, but was also in its essence just and righteous on the part of the borderers. Even the unpardonable and hideous atrocity of the murder of Logan's family was surpassed in horror by many of the massacres committed by the Indians about the same time. The annals of the border are dark and terrible.

Among the characters who played the leaders' parts in this short and tragic drama of the backwoods few came to much afterward. Cresap died a brave Revolutionary soldier. Of Greathouse we know nothing; we can only hope that eventually the Indians scalped him. Conolly became a virulent Tory, who yet lacked the power to do the evil that he wished. Lewis served creditably in the Revolution; while at its outbreak Lord Dunmore was driven from Virginia and disappears from our ken. Proud, gloomy Logan never recovered from the blow that had been dealt him; he drank deeper and deeper, and became more and more an implacable, moody, and bloodthirsty savage, yet with noble quali-

[1] It is difficult to understand why some minor historians consider this war as fruitless.

ties that came to the surface now and then. Again and again he wrought havoc among the frontier settlers; yet we several times hear of his saving the lives of prisoners. Once he saved Simon Kenton from torture and death, when Girty, moved by a rare spark of compassion for his former comrade, had already tried to do so and failed. At last, he perished in a drunken brawl by the hand of another Indian.

Cornstalk died a grand death, but by an act of cowardly treachery on the part of his American foes; it is one of the darkest stains on the checkered pages of frontier history. Early in 1777 he came into the garrison at Point Pleasant to explain that, while he was anxious to keep at peace, his tribe were bent on going to war; and he frankly added that, of course, if they did so he should have to join them. He and three other Indians, among them his son and the chief Redhawk, who had also been at the Kanawha battle, were detained as hostages. While they were thus confined in the fort a member of a company of rangers was killed by the Indians near by; whereupon his comrades, headed by their captain,[1] rushed in furious anger into the fort to slay the hostages. Cornstalk heard them rushing in and knew that his hour had come; with unmoved countenance he exhorted his son not to fear, for it was the will of the Great Spirit that they should die there together; then, as the murderers burst into the room, he quietly rose up to meet them, and fell dead, pierced by seven or eight bullets. His son and his comrades were likewise butchered, and we have no record of any more infamous deed.

Though among the whites the men who took promi-

[1] John Hall; it is worth while preserving the name of the ringleader in so brutal and cowardly a butchery. See Stewart's "Narrative."

nent parts in the struggle never afterward made any mark, yet it is worth noting that all the after-time leaders of the West were engaged in some way in Lord Dunmore's war. Their fates were various. Boone led the vanguard of the white advance across the mountains, wandered his life long through the wilderness, and ended his days in extreme old age beyond the Mississippi, a backwoods hunter to the last. Shelby won laurels at King's Mountain, became the first governor of Kentucky, and when an old man revived the memories of his youth by again leading the Western men in battle against the British and Indians. Sevier and Robertson were for a generation the honored chiefs of the southwestern people. Clark, the ablest of all, led a short but brilliant career, during which he made the whole nation his debtor. Then, like Logan, he sank under the curse of drunkenness—often hardly less dangerous to the white borderer than to his red enemy—and passed the remainder of his days in ignoble and slothful retirement.

NOTE

I

(Campbell MSS.; this letter and the one following are from copies, and the spelling, etc., may not be quite as in the originals.)

Camp Opposite the Mouth of the
Great Kenaway,
October 16—1774.

Dear Uncle,

I gladly embrace this opportunity to acquaint you that we are all here yet alive through God's mercies, & I sincerely wish that this may find you and your family in the station of health that we left you. I never had anything worth notice to acquaint you with since I left you till now—the express seems to be hurrying, that I cannot write you with the

same coolness and deliberation as I would. We arrived at the mouth of the Canaway, thursday 6th. Octo. and encamped on a fine piece of ground, with an intent to wait for the Governor and his party but hearing that he was going another way we contented ourselves to stay there a few days to rest the troops, &c. where we looked upon ourselves to be in safety till Monday morning the 10th. instant when two of our company went out before day to hunt—to wit Val. Sevier and James Robinson and discovered a party of Indians. As I expect you will hear something of our battle before you get this, I have here stated the affair nearly to you:

For the satisfaction of the people in your parts in this they have a true state of the memorable battle fought at the mouth of the Great Canaway on the 10th. instant. Monday morning about half an hour before sunrise, two of Capt. Russells company discovered a large party of Indians about a mile from camp, one of which men was killed, the other made his escape & brought in his intelligence. In two or three minutes after, two of Capt. Shelby's Company came in & confirmed the account, Col. Andrew Lewis being informed thereof immediately ordered Col. Charles Lewis to take the command of 150 men from Augusta and with him went Capt. Dickison, Capt. Harrison, Capt. Wilson, Capt. John Lewis, from Augusta and Capt. Sockridge which made the first division. Col. Fleming was also ordered to take the command of one hundred and fifty more, consisting of Battertout, Fincastle & Bedford troops,—viz., Capt. Buford of Bedford, Capt. Lewis of Battertout, Capt. Shelby & Capt. Russell of Fincastle which made the second division. Col. Lewis marched with his division to the right some distance from the Ohio. Col. Fleming with his division up the bank of the Ohio to the left. Col. Lewis' division had not marched little more than a quarter of a mile from camp when about sunrise, an attack was made on the front of his division in a most vigorous manner by the united tribes Indians,—Shawnees, Delawares, Mingoes, Taways, and of several other nations, in number not less than eight hundred, and by many thought to be a thousand. In this heavy attack Col. Charles Lewis received a wound which soon after caused his death, and several of his men fell on the spot,—in fact the Au-

gusta division was forced to give way to the heavy fire of the enemy. In about the second of a minute after the attack on Col. Lewis' division, the enemy engaged of Col. Fleming's division on the ohio and in a short time Col. Fleming received two balls thro' his left arm and one thro' his breast; and after animating the Captains & soldiers in a calm manner to the pursuit of victory returned to the camp. The loss of the brave Col's was severely felt by the officers in particular. But the Augusta troops being shortly reinforced from camp by Col. Field with his company, together with Capt. M'Dowers, Capt. Matthew's and Capt. Stewart's from Augusta; Capt. John Lewis, Capt. Paulins, Capt. Arbuckle's, and Capt. M'Clannahan's from Battertout. The enemy no longer able to maintain their ground was forced to give way till they were in a line with the troops left in action on branches of ohio by Col. Fleming. In this precipitate retreat Col. Field was killed; after which Capt. Shelby was ordered to take the command. During this time which was till after twelve of the clock, the action continued extremely hot, the close underwood, many steep banks and logs greatly favored their retreat, and the bravest of their men made the *best* use of themselves, while others were throwing their dead into the ohio, and carrying off the wounded. After twelve the action in a small degree abated, but continued sharp enough till after one o'clock. Their long retreat gave them a most advantageous spot of ground; from which it appeared to the officers so difficult to dislodge them, that it was thought most advisable, to stand as the line was then formed, which was about a mile and a quarter in length, and had till then sustained a constant and equal weight of fire from wing to wing. It was till half an hour of sunset they continued firing on us, which we returned to their disadvantage, at length night coming on they found a safe retreat. They had not the satisfaction of scalping any of our men save one or two stragglers, whom they killed before the engagement. Many of their dead they scalped rather than we should have them, but our troops scalped upwards of twenty of those who were first killed. Its beyond a doubt, their loss in numbers far exceeds ours which is considerable.

Field officers killed—Col. Charles Lewis, & Col. John

Fields. Field officers wounded—Col. William Fleming;—Capts. killed, John Murray, Capt. Samuel Wilson, Capt. Robert M'Clannahan, Capt. James Ward. Capts. wounded—Thomas Buford, John Dickison & John Scidmore. Subalterns killed, Lieutenant Hugh Allen, Ensign Matthew Brackin & Ensign Cundiff; Subalterns wounded, Lieut. Lane, Lieut. Vance, Lieut. Goldman, Lieut. James Robertson; and about 46 killed and 60 wounded. From this sir you may judge that we had a very hard day; its really impossible for me to express or you to conceive the acclamations that we were under,—sometimes the hideous cries of the enemy, and the groans of our wounded men lying around, was enough to shudder the stoutest heart. Its the general opinion of the officers that we shall soon have another engagement, as we have now got over into the enemy's country. We expect to meet the Governor about forty or fifty miles from here. Nothing will save us from another battle, unless they attack the Governors party. Five men that came in dadys [daddy's] company were killed. I don't know that you were acquainted with any of them, except Mark Williams who lived with Roger Top. Acquaint Mr. Carmack that his son was slightly wounded through the shoulder and arm and that he is in a likely way of recovery. We leave him at the mouth of the Canaway and one very careful hand to take care of him. There is a garrison and three hundred men left at that place, with a surgeon to heal the wounded. We expect to return to the garrison in about 16 days from the Shawny towns.

I have nothing more particular to acquaint you with concerning the battle. As to the country I cannot say much in praise of any that I have yet seen. Dady intended writing you, but did not know of the express until the time was too short. I have wrote to mammy tho' not so fully to you, as I then expected the express was just going. We seem to be all in a moving posture, just going from this place, so that I must conclude, wishing you health and prosperity until I see you and your family. In the meantime I am your truly affectionate friend and humble servant,

ISAAC SHELBY.

To Mr. John Shelby,
Holston River, Fincastle County.
Favd. by Mr. Benj. Gray.

II

(Campbell MSS.)

October ye 31st. 1774.

Dear Sir,

Being on my way home to Fincastle court, was overtaken this evening by letters from Colo. Christian and other gentlemen on the expedition, giving an account of a battle which was fought between our troops & the enemy Indians, on the 10th instant, in the Fork of the Ohio & the Great Kanawha.

The particulars of the action, drawn up by Colo. Andr. Lewis I have sent you enclosed, also a return of the killed and wounded, by which you will see that we have lost many brave and valiant officers & soldiers, whose loss to their families, as well as to the community, is very great.

Colo. Christian with the Fincastle troops (except the companies commanded by Capts. Russell & Shelby, who were in the action) were on their march; and on the evening of that day, about 15 miles from the field of battle, heard that the action began in the morning. They marched hard, and got to the camp about midnight. The cries of the wounded, without any persons of skill or anything to nourish people in their unhappy situation, was striking. The Indians had crossed the river on rafts, 6 or 8 miles above the Forks, in the night, and it is believed, intended to attack the camp, had they not been prevented by our men marching to meet them at the distance of half a mile. It is said the enemy behaved with bravery and great caution, that they frequently damned our men for white sons of bitches. Why did they not whistle now? [alluding to the fifes] & that they would learn them to shoot.

The Governor was then at Hockhocking, about 12 or 15 miles below the mouth of the Little Kanawha, from whence he intended to march his party to a place called Chillicoffee, about 20 miles farther than the towns where it was said the Shawneese had assembled with their families and allies, to make a stand, as they had good houses and plenty of ammunition & provisions & had cleared the woods to a great

distance from the place. His party who were to march from the camp was about 1200, and to join Colo. Lewis' party about 28 miles from Chillicoffee. But whether the action above mentioned would disconcert this plan or not, I think appears a little uncertain, as there is a probability that his excellency on hearing the news might, with his party, fall down the river and join Colo. Lewis' party and march together against the enemy.

They were about building a breastwork at the Forks, & after leaving a proper party to take care of the wounded & the provisions there, that Colo. Lewis could march upwards of a thousand men to join his Lordship, so that the whole when they meet will be about 2200 choice men. What may be their success God only knows, but it is highly probable the matter is decided before this time.

Colo. Christian says, from the accounts he had the enemy behaved with inconceivable bravery. The head men walked about in the time of action, exhorting their men "to be close, shoot well, be strong of fight." They had parties planted on the opposite side of both rivers to shoot our men as they swam over, not doubting, as is supposed, but they would gain a complete victory. In the evening late they called to our men "that they had 2000 men for them to-morrow, and that they had 1100 men now as well as they." They also made very merry about a treaty.

Poor Colo. Charles Lewis was shot on a clear piece of ground, as he had not taken a tree, encouraging his men to advance. On being wounded he handed his gun to a person nigh him and retired to the camp, telling his men as he passed "I am wounded but go on and be brave." If the loss of a good man a sincere friend, and a brave officer, claims a tear, he certainly is entitled to it.

Colo. Fields was shot at a great tree by two Indians on his right, while one on his left was amusing him with talk and the Colo. endeavoring to get a shot at him.

Besides the loss the troops met with in action by Colo. Fleming who was obliged to retire from the field, which was very great, the wounded met with the most irreparable loss in an able and skillful surgeon. Colo. Christian says that his [Flemings] lungs or part of them came out of the wound

in his breast but were pushed back; and by the last part of his letter, which was dated the 16th. instant, he has some hopes of his recovery.

Thus, sir, I have given you an account of the action from the several letters I recd., and have only to add, that Colo. Christian desires me to inform Mrs. Christian of his welfare, which with great pleasure I do through this channel, and should any further news come, which I much expect soon, I shall take the earliest oppy. of communicating the same to you. It is believed the troops will surely return in Nov.

I write in a hurry and amidst a crowd of inquisitive people, therefore hope you will excuse the inaccuracy of, D'r. Sir,

Your sincere well wisher & most obedt. Servt.,

WM. PRESTON.

P. S. If you please you may give Mr. Purdie a copy of the enclosed papers, & anything else you may think worthy the notice of the Public.

III

LOGAN'S SPEECH

There has been much controversy over the genuineness of Logan's speech; but those who have questioned it have done so with singularly little reason. In fact, its authenticity would never have been impugned at all had it not (wrongly) blamed Cresap with killing Logan's family. Cresap's defenders, with curious folly, have in consequence thought it necessary to show, not that Logan was mistaken, but that he never delivered the speech at all.

The truth seems to be that Cresap, without provocation, but after being incited to war by Conolly's letter, murdered some peaceful Indians, among whom there were certainly some friends and possibly some relations of Logan (see testimony of Colonel Ebenezer Zane, in Jefferson's "Notes," and "American Pioneer," I, 12; also Clark's letter in the Jefferson Papers); but that he had no share in the massacre of

Logan's family at Yellow Creek by Greathouse and his crew two or three days afterward. The two massacres occurring so near together, however, produced the impression not only among the Indians but among many whites (as shown in the body of this work), that Cresap had been guilty of both; and this Logan undoubtedly believed, as can be seen by the letter he wrote and left tied to a war-club in a murdered settler's house. This was an injustice to Cresap; but it was a very natural mistake on Logan's part.

After the speech was recited it attracted much attention; was published in newspapers, periodicals, etc., and was extensively quoted. Jefferson, as we learn from his Papers at Washington, took it down in 1775, getting it from Lord Dunmore's officers, and published it in his "Notes," in 1784; unfortunately, he took for granted that its allegations as regards Cresap were true, and accordingly prefaced it by a very unjust attack on the reputed murderer. Until thirteen years after this publication, and until twenty-three years after the speech had been published for the first time, no one thought of questioning it. Then Luther Martin, of Maryland, attacked its authenticity, partly because he was Cresap's son-in-law, and partly because he was a Federalist, and a bitter opponent of Jefferson. Like all of his successors in the same line, he confused two entirely distinct things, viz., the justice of the charge against Cresap, and the authenticity of Logan's speech. His controversy with Jefferson grew very bitter. He succeeded in showing clearly that Cresap was wrongly accused by Logan; he utterly failed to impugn the authenticity of the latter's speech. Jefferson, thanks to a letter he received from Clark, must have known that Cresap had been accused wrongly; but he was irritated by the controversy, and characteristically refrained in any of his publications from doing justice to the slandered man's memory.

A Mr. Jacobs soon afterward wrote a life of Cresap, in which he attempted both of the feats aimed at by Martin; it is quite an interesting production, but exceedingly weak in its arguments. Neville B. Craig, in the February, 1847, number of *The Olden Time*, a historical magazine, followed on the same lines. Finally, Brantz Mayer, in his very in-

teresting little book, "Logan and Cresap," went over the whole matter in a much fairer manner than his predecessors, but still distinctly as an advocate; for though he collected with great industry and gave impartially all the original facts (so that from what he gives alone it is quite possible to prove that the speech is certainly genuine), yet his own conclusions show great bias. Thus, he severely rules out any testimony against Cresap that is not absolutely unquestioned; but admits without hesitation any and every sort of evidence leaning against poor Logan's character or the authenticity of his speech. He even goes so far (pp. 122, 123) as to say it is not a "speech" at all—although it would puzzle a man to know what else to call it, as he also declares it is not a message—and shows the animus of his work by making the gratuitous suggestion that if Logan made it at all he was probably at the time excited "as well by the cruelties he had committed as by liquor."

It is necessary, therefore, to give a brief summary of a portion of the evidence in its favor, as well as of all the evidence against it. Jefferson's "Notes" and Mr. Mayer's book go fully into the matter.

The evidence in its favor is as follows:

(1) Gibson's statement. This is the keystone of the arch. John Gibson was a man of note and of unblemished character; he was made a general by Washington, and held high appointive positions under Madison and Jefferson; he was also an Associate Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in Pennsylvania. Throughout his life he bore a reputation for absolute truthfulness. He was the messenger who went to Logan, heard the speech, took it down, and gave it to Lord Dunmore. We have his deposition, delivered under oath, that "Logan delivered to him the speech nearly as related by Mr. Jefferson in his 'Notes,' " when the two were alone together, and that he "on his return to camp delivered the speech to Lord Dunmore," and that he also at the time told Logan he was mistaken about Cresap. Brantz Mayer, who accepts his statement as substantially true, thinks that he probably only reported the *substance* of Logan's speech, or so much of it as he could recollect; but in the State Department at Washington, among the Jefferson Papers (5–1–4),

is a statement by John Anderson, a merchant in Fredericksburg, who was an Indian trader at Pittsburgh in 1774; he says that he questioned Gibson as to whether he had not himself added something to the speech, to which Gibson replied that he had not changed it in any way, but had translated it literally, as well as he could, though he was unable to come up to the force of the expressions in the original.

This evidence itself is absolutely conclusive, except on the supposition that Gibson was a malicious and infamous liar. The men who argue that the speech was fictitious are also obliged to explain what motive there could possibly have been for the deception; they accordingly advance the theory that it was part of Dunmore's (imaginary) treacherous conduct, as he wished to discredit Cresap, because he knew —apparently by divination—that the latter was going to be a whig. Even granting the Earl corrupt motives and a prophetic soul, it remains to be explained why he should wish to injure an obscure borderer, whom nobody has ever heard of except in connection with Logan; it would have served the purpose quite as well to have used the equally unknown name of the real offender, Greathouse. The fabrication of the speech would have been an absolutely motiveless and foolish transaction, to which Gibson, a pronounced whig, must needs have been a party. This last fact shows that there could have been no intention of using the speech in the British interest.

(2) The statement of General George Rogers Clark. (Like the preceding this can be seen in the Jefferson Papers.) Clark was present in Dunmore's camp at the time. He says: "Logan's speech to Dunmore now came forward as related by Mr. Jefferson and was generally believed and indeed not doubted to have been genuine and dictated by Logan— The Army knew it was wrong so far as it respected Cresap, and afforded an opportunity of rallying that Gentleman on the subject—I discovered that Cresap was displeased and told him that he must be a very great Man, that the Indians shouldered him with every thing that had happened. . . . Logan is the author of the speech as related by Mr. Jefferson." Clark's remembrance of his rallying Cresap shows that the speech contained Cresap's name and that it was

read before the army; several other witnesses, whose names are not necessary to mention, simply corroborate Clark's statements, and a large amount of indirect evidence to the same effect could be produced were there the least necessity. (See Jefferson's "Notes," the "American Pioneer," etc.)

The evidence against the authenticity of the speech, outside of mere conjectures and innuendoes, is as follows:

(1) Logan called Cresap a colonel when he was really a captain. This inability of an Indian to discriminate accurately between these two titles of frontier militia officers is actually solemnly brought forward as telling against the speech.

(2) Logan accused Cresap of committing a murder which he had not committed. But, as we have already seen, Logan had made the same accusation in his unquestionably authentic letter, written previously; and many whites, as well as Indians, thought as Logan did.

(3) A Colonel Benjamin Wilson, who was with Dunmore's army, says that "he did not hear the charge preferred in Logan's speech against Captain Cresap." This is mere negative evidence, valueless in any event, and doubly so in view of Clark's statement.

(4) Mr. Neville B. Craig, in *Olden Time*, says in 1847 that "many years before a Mr. James McKee, the brother of Mr. William Johnson's deputy, had told him that he had seen the speech in the handwriting of one of the Johnsons . . . before it was seen by Logan." This is a hearsay statement delivered just seventy-three years after the event, and it is on its face so wildly improbable as not to need further comment, at least until there is some explanation as to why the Johnsons should have written the speech, how they could possibly have gotten it to Logan, and why Gibson should have entered into the conspiracy.

(5) A Benjamin Tomlinson testifies that he believes that the speech was fabricated by Gibson; he hints, but does not frankly assert, that Gibson was not sent after Logan, but that Girty was; and swears that he heard the speech read three times and that the name of Cresap was not mentioned in it.

He was said in later life to bear a good reputation; but in

his deposition he admits under oath that he was present at the Yellow Creek murder (*Olden Time*, II, 61; the editor, by the way, seems to call him alternately Joseph and Benjamin); and he was therefore an unconvicted criminal, who connived at or participated in one of the most brutal and cowardly deeds ever done on the frontier. His statement as against Gibson's would be worthless anyhow; fortunately, his testimony as to the omission of Cresap's name from the speech is also flatly contradicted by Clark. With the words of two such men against his, and bearing in mind that all that he says against the authenticity of the speech itself is confessedly mere supposition on his part, his statement must be promptly set aside as worthless. If true, by the way, it would conflict with (4) Craig's statement.

This is literally all the "evidence" against the speech. It scarcely needs serious discussion; it may be divided into two parts—one containing allegations that are silly, and the other those that are discredited.

There is probably very little additional evidence to be obtained, on one side or the other; it is all in, and Logan's speech can be unhesitatingly pronounced authentic. Doubtless there have been verbal alterations in it; there is not extant a report of any famous speech which does not probably differ in some way from the words as they were actually spoken. There is also a good deal of confusion as to whether the council took place in the Indian town, or in Dunmore's camp; whether Logan was sought out alone in his hut by Gibson, or came up and drew the latter aside while he was at the council, etc. In the same way, we have excellent authority for stating that, prior to the battle of the Great Kanawha, Lewis reached the mouth of that river on October 1st, and that he reached it on October 6th; that on the day of the attack the troops marched from camp a quarter of a mile, and that they marched three-quarters; that the Indians lost more men than the whites, and that they lost fewer; that Lewis behaved well, and that he behaved badly; that the whites lost 140 men, and that they lost 215, etc. The conflict of evidence as to the dates and accessory details of Logan's speech is no greater than it is as to the dates and accessory details of the murder by Greathouse, or as to

all the preliminaries of the main battle of the campaign. Coming from backwoods sources, it is inevitable that we should have confusion on points of detail; but as to the main question there seems almost as little reason for doubting the authenticity of Logan's speech, as for doubting the reality of the battle of the Great Kanawha.

CHAPTER X

BOONE AND THE SETTLEMENT OF KENTUCKY

1775

Lord Dunmore's war, waged by Americans for the good of America, was the opening act in the drama whereof the closing scene was played at Yorktown. It made possible the twofold character of the Revolutionary War, wherein on the one hand the Americans won by conquest and colonization new lands for their children, and on the other wrought out their national independence of the British king. Save for Lord Dunmore's war, we could not have settled beyond the mountains until after we had ended our quarrel with our kinsfolk across the sea. It so cowed the Northern Indians that for two or three years they made no further organized effort to check the white advance. In consequence, the Kentucky pioneers had only to contend with small parties of enemies until time had been given them to become so firmly rooted in the land that it proved impossible to oust them. Had Cornstalk and his fellow chiefs kept their hosts unbroken, they would undoubtedly have swept Kentucky clear of settlers in 1775—as was done by the mere rumor of their hostility the preceding summer. Their defeat gave the opportunity for Boone to settle Kentucky, and therefore for Robertson to settle Middle Tennessee, and for Clark to conquer Illinois and the Northwest; it was the first in the chain that gave us for our Western frontier in 1783 the Mississippi and not the Alleghanies.

As already mentioned, the speculative North Carolinian Henderson had for some time been planning the establishment of a proprietary colony beyond the mountains, as a bold stroke to re-establish his ruined fortunes; and early in 1775, as the time seemed favorable, he proceeded to put his venturous scheme into execution. For years he had been in close relations with Boone; and the latter had attempted to lead a band of actual settlers to Kentucky in 1773. Naturally, when Henderson wished to fix on a place wherein to plant his colony, he chose the beautiful land which the rumor of Boone's discovery had rendered famous all along the border; and equally naturally he chose the pioneer hunter himself to act as his lieutenant and as the real leader of the expedition. The result of the joint efforts of these two men was to plant in Kentucky a colony of picked settlers, backed by such moral and material support as enabled them to maintain themselves permanently in the land. Boone had not been the first to discover Kentucky, nor was he the first to found a settlement therein;[1] but it was his exploration of the land that alone bore lasting fruit, and the settlement he founded was the first that contained within itself the elements of permanence and growth.

Of course, as in every other settlement of inland America, the especial point to be noticed is the individual initiative of the different settlers. Neither the royal nor the provincial governments had anything to do with the various colonies that were planted almost simultaneously on the soil of Kentucky. Each little band of pioneers had its own leaders and was stirred by

[1] The first permanent settlement was Harrodsburg, then called Harrodstown, founded in 1774, but soon abandoned, and only permanently occupied on March 18, 1775, a fortnight before Boone began the erection of his fort.

its own motives. All had heard, from different sources, of the beauty and fertility of the land, and as the great danger from the Indians was temporarily past, all alike went in to take possession, not only acting without previous agreement, but for the most part being even in ignorance of one another's designs. Yet the dangers surrounding these new-formed and far-off settlements were so numerous and of such grave nature, that they could hardly have proved permanent had it not been for the comparatively well-organized settlement of Boone, and for the temporary immunity which Henderson's treaty purchased from the Southern Indians.

The settlement of Kentucky was a much more adventurous and hazardous proceeding than had been the case with any previous westward extension of population from the old colonies; because Kentucky, instead of abutting on already settled districts, was an island in the wilderness, separated by two hundred miles of unpeopled and almost impassable forest from even the extreme outposts of the seacoast commonwealths. Hitherto every new settlement had been made by the simple process of a portion of the backwoods pioneers being thrust out in advance of the others, while nevertheless keeping in touch with them, and having their rear covered, as it were, by the already colonized country. Now, for the first time, a new community of pioneers sprang up, isolated in the heart of the wilderness and thrust far beyond the uttermost limits of the old colonies, whose solid mass lay along the Atlantic seaboard. The vast belt of mountainous woodland that lay between was as complete a barrier as if it had been a broad arm of the ocean. The first American incomers to Kentucky were for several years almost cut off from the bulk of their fellows beyond the forest-clad moun-

tains, much as, thirteen centuries before, their forebears, the first English settlers in Britain, had been cut off from the rest of the Low Dutch folk who continued to dwell on the eastern coast of the German Ocean.

Henderson, and those associated with him in his scheme of land speculation, began to open negotiations with the Cherokees as soon as the victory of the Great Kanawha for the moment lessened the danger to be apprehended from the northwestern Indians. In October, 1774, he and Nathaniel Hart, one of his partners in the scheme, journeyed to the Otari towns and made their proposals. The Indians proceeded very cautiously, deputing one of their number, a chief called the Carpenter, to return with the two white envoys and examine the goods they proposed to give in exchange. To this Henderson made no objection; on the contrary, it pleased him, for he was anxious to get an indisputable Indian title to the proposed new colony. The Indian delegate made a favorable report in January, 1775; and then the Overhill Cherokees were bidden to assemble at the Sycamore Shoals of the Watauga. The order was issued by the head chief, Oconostota, a very old man, renowned for the prowess he had shown in former years when warring against the English. On the 17th of March, Oconostota and two other chiefs, the Raven and the Carpenter, signed the treaty of the Sycamore Shoals in the presence and with the assent of some twelve hundred of their tribe, half of them warriors; for all who could had come to the treaty grounds. Henderson thus obtained a grant of all the lands lying along and between the Kentucky and the Cumberland rivers. He promptly named the new colony Transylvania. The purchase money was ten thousand pounds of lawful English money; but, of course, the payment was made

mainly in merchandise and not specie. It took a number of days before the treaty was finally concluded; no rum was allowed to be sold, and there was little drunkenness; but herds of beeves were driven in, that the Indians might make a feast.

The main opposition to the treaty was made by a chief named Dragging Canoe, who continued for years to be the most inveterate foe of the white race to be found among the Cherokees. On the second day of the talk he spoke strongly against granting the Americans what they asked, pointing out, in words of glowing eloquence, how the Cherokees, who had once owned the land down to the sea, had been steadily driven back by the whites until they had reached the mountains, and warning his comrades that they must now put a stop at all hazards to further encroachments, under penalty of seeing the loss of their last hunting-grounds, by which alone their children could live. When he had finished his speech, he abruptly left the ring of speakers, and the council broke up in confusion. The Indian onlookers were much impressed by what he said; and for some hours the whites were in dismay lest all further negotiations should prove fruitless. It was proposed to get the deed privately; but to this the treaty-makers would not consent, answering that they cared nothing for the treaty unless it was concluded in open council, with the full assent of all the Indians. By much exertion, Dragging Canoe was finally persuaded to come back; the council was resumed next day, and finally the grant was made without further opposition. The Indians chose their own interpreter; and the treaty was read aloud and translated, sentence by sentence, before it was signed, on the fourth day of the formal talking.

The chiefs undoubtedly knew that they could trans-

fer only a very imperfect title to the land they thus deeded away. Both Oconostota and Dragging Canoe told the white treaty-makers that the land beyond the mountains, whither they were going, was a "dark ground," a "bloody ground"; and warned them that they must go at their own risk and not hold the Cherokees responsible, for the latter could no longer hold them by the hand. Dragging Canoe especially told Henderson that there was a black cloud hanging over the land, for it lay in the path of the northwestern Indians—who were already at war with the Cherokees, and would surely show as little mercy to the white men as to the red. Another old chief said to Boone: "Brother, we have given you a fine land, but I believe you will have much trouble in settling it." What he said was true, and the whites were taught by years of long warfare that Kentucky was indeed what the Cherokees called it, a dark and bloody ground.[1]

After Henderson's main treaty was concluded, the Watauga Association entered into another, by which

[1] The whole account of this treaty is taken from the Jefferson MSS., 5th Series, vol. VIII; "A copy of the proceedings of the Virginia Convention, from June 15 to November 19, 1777, in relation to the Memorial of Richard Henderson, and others"; especially from the depositions of James Robertson, Isaac Shelby, Charles Robertson, Nathaniel Gist, and Thomas Price, who were all present. There is much interesting matter aside from the treaty; Simon Girty makes depositions as to Braddock's defeat and Bouquet's fight; Lewis, Croghan, and others show the utter vagueness and conflict of the Indian titles to Kentucky, etc. Though the Cherokees spoke of the land as a "dark" or "bloody" place or ground, it does not seem that by either of these terms they referred to the actual meaning of the name Kentucky. One or two of the witnesses tried to make out that the treaty was unfairly made; but the bulk of the evidence is overwhelmingly the other way.

Haywood gives a long speech made by Oconostota against the treaty; but this original report shows that Oconostota favored the treaty from the outset, and that it was Dragging Canoe who spoke against it. Haywood wrote fifty years after the event, and gathered many of his facts from tradition; probably tradition had become confused and reversed the position of the two chiefs. Haywood purports to give almost the exact language Oconostota used; but when he is in error even as to who made the speech, he is exceedingly unlikely to be correct in anything more than its general tenor.

they secured from the Cherokees, for two thousand pounds sterling, the lands they had already leased.

As soon as it became evident that the Indians would consent to the treaty, Henderson sent Boone ahead with a company of thirty men to clear a trail from the Holston to the Kentucky.[1] This, the first regular path opened into the wilderness, was long called Boone's trace, and became forever famous in Kentucky history as the Wilderness Road, the track along which so many tens of thousands travelled while journeying to their hoped-for homes in the bountiful West. Boone started on March 10th with his sturdy band of rifle-bearing axemen, and chopped out a narrow bridle-path—a pony trail, as it would now be called in the West. It led over Cumberland Gap and crossed Cumberland, Laurel, and Rockcastle rivers at fords that were swimming deep in the time of freshets. Where it went through tall, open timber, it was marked by blazes on the tree trunks, while a regular path was cut and trodden out through the thickets of underbrush and the dense cane-brakes and reed-beds.

After a fortnight's hard work the party had almost reached the banks of the Kentucky River, and deemed that their chief trials were over. But half an hour before daybreak on the morning of the 25th, as they lay round their smouldering camp-fires, they were attacked by some Indians, who killed two of them and wounded a third; the others sprang to arms at once and stood their ground without suffering further loss or damage till it grew light, when the Indians silently drew off.[2]

[1] Then sometimes called the Louisa—a name given it at first by the English explorers, but by great good fortune not retained.

[2] Collins, II, 498. Letter of Daniel Boone, April 1, 1775. Collins has done good work for Kentucky history, having collected a perfect mass of materials of every sort. But he does not discriminate between facts of undoubted authenticity and

Continuing his course, Boone reached the Kentucky River, and on April 1st began to build Boonesborough, on an open plain where there was a lick with two sulphur springs.

Meanwhile, other pioneers, as hardy and enterprising as Boone's companions, had likewise made up their minds that they would come in to possess the land; and in bands or small parties they had crossed the mountains or floated down the Ohio, under the leadership of such men as Harrod, Logan,[1] and the McAfees.[2] But hardly had they built their slight log cabins, covered with brush or bark, and broken ground for the corn-planting, when some small Indian war-parties, including that which had attacked Boone's company, appeared among them. Several men were "killed and sculped," as Boone phrased it; and the panic among the rest was very great, insomuch that many forthwith set out to return. Boone was not so easily daunted; and he at once sent a special messenger to hurry forward the main body under Henderson, writing to the latter with quiet resolution and much good sense:

"My advice to you, sir, is to come or send as soon as possible. Your company is desired greatly for the people are very uneasy, but are willing to stay and venture their lives with you, and now is the time to flusterate [frustrate?] the intentions of the Indians, and keep the country whilst we are in it. If we give way to them now, it will ever be the case." [3]

tales resting on the idlest legend; so that he must be used with caution, and he is, of course, not to be trusted where he is biassed by the extreme rancor of his political prejudices. Of the Kentucky historians, Marshall is by far the most brilliant, and Mann Butler the most trustworthy and impartial. Both are much better than Collins.

[1] Benjamin Logan; there were many of the family in Kentucky. It was a common name along the border; the Indian chief, Logan, had been named after one of the Pennsylvania branch.

[2] McAfee MSS.

[3] Boone's letter.

Henderson had started off as soon as he had finished the treaty. He took wagons with him, but was obliged to halt and leave them in Powell's Valley, for beyond that even so skilful a pathfinder and road-maker as Boone had not been able to find or make a way passable for wheels.[1] Accordingly, their goods and implements were placed on pack-horses and the company started again.[2] Most fortunately, a full account of their journey has been kept; for among Henderson's followers at this time was a man named William Calk, who jotted down in his diary the events of each day.[3] It is a short record, but as amusing as it is instructive; for the writer's mind was evidently as vigorous as his language was terse and untrammelled. He was with a small party who were going out as partners; and his journal is a faithful record of all things, great or small, that at the time impressed him. The opening entry contains the information that "Abram's dog's leg got broke by Drake's dog." The owner of the latter beast, by the way, could not have been a pleasant companion on a trip of this sort, for elsewhere the writer, who, like most backwoodsmen, appreciated cleanliness in essentials, records with evident disfavor the fact that "Mr. Drake Bakes bread without washing his hands." Every man who has had the misfortune to drive a pack-train in thick timber, or along a bad trail, will appreciate keenly the following incident, which occurred soon after the party had set out for home:

"I turned my hors to drive before me and he got scard ran away threw Down the Saddel Bags and broke

[1] Richard Henderson's "Journal of an Expedition to Cantucky in 1775" (Collins).

[2] April 5th.

[3] It is printed in the Filson Club Publications; see "The Wilderness Road," by Thomas Speed, Louisville, Ky., 1886, one of the best of an excellent series.

three of our powder goards and Abram's beast Burst open a walet of corn and lost a good Deal and made a turrabel flustration amongst the Reast of the Horses Drake's mair run against a sapling and noct it down we cacht them all again and went on and lodged at John Duncan's."

Another entry records the satisfaction of the party when at a log fort (before getting into the wilderness) they procured some good loaf-bread and good whiskey.

They carried with them seed-corn[1] and "Irish tators" to plant, and for use on the journey had bacon, and corn-meal, which was made either into baked corn-dodgers or else into johnny-cakes, which were simply cooked on a board beside the fire, or else perhaps on a hot stone or in the ashes. The meal had to be used very sparingly; occasionally a beef was killed out of the herd of cattle that accompanied the emigrants; but generally they lived on the game they shot—deer, turkeys, and, when they got to Kentucky, buffaloes. Sometimes this was killed as they travelled; more often the hunters got it by going out in the evening after they had pitched camp.

The journey was hard and tiresome. At times it rained; and again there were heavy snow-storms, in one of which an emigrant got lost and only found his way to camp by the help of a pocket-compass. The mountains were very steep, and it was painfully laborious work to climb them while chopping out a way for the pack-train. At night a watch had to be kept for Indians. It was only here and there that the beasts got good grazing. Sometimes the horses had their saddles turned while struggling through the woods. But the

[1] It is not necessary to say that "corn" means maize; Americans do not use the word in the sense in which it is employed in Britain.

great difficulty came in crossing the creeks, where the banks were rotten, the bottom bad, or the water deep; then the horses would get mired down and wet their packs, or they would have to be swum across while their loads were ferried over on logs. One day, in going along a creek, they had to cross it no less than fifty times by "very bad foards."

On the 7th of April they were met by Boone's runner, bearing tidings of the loss occasioned by the Indians; and from that time on they met parties of would-be settlers, who, panic-struck by the sudden forays, were fleeing from the country. Henderson's party kept on with good courage, and persuaded quite a number of the fugitives to turn back with them. Some of these men who were thus leaving the country were not doing so because of fright; for many, among them the McAfees, had not brought out their families, but had simply come to clear the ground, build cabins, plant corn, and turn some branded cattle loose in the woods, where they were certain to thrive well, winter and summer, on the nourishing cane and wild pea-vine. The men then intended to go back to the settlements and bring out their wives and children, perhaps not till the following year; so that things were in a measure prepared for them, though they were very apt to find that the cattle had been stolen by the Indians, or had strayed too far to be recovered.[1]

The bulk of those fleeing, however, were simply frightened out of the country. There seems no reason to doubt[2] that the establishment of the strong, well-

[1] McAfee MSS. Some of the McAfees returned with Henderson.

[2] Boone's letter, Henderson's journal, Calk's diary, McAfee's autobiography, all mention the way in which the early settlers began to swarm out of the country in April, 1775. To judge from their accounts, if the movement had not been checked instantly the country would have been depopulated in a fortnight, exactly as in 1774.

backed settlement of Boonesborough was all that prevented the abandonment of Kentucky at this time; and when such was the effect of a foray by small and scattered war-parties of Indians from tribes nominally at peace with us,[1] it can easily be imagined how hopeless it would have been to have tried to settle the land had there still been in existence a strong hostile confederacy such as that presided over by Cornstalk. Beyond doubt the restless and vigorous frontiersmen would ultimately have won their way into the coveted Western lands; yet had it not been for the battle of the Great Kanawha, Boone and Henderson could not, in 1775, have planted their colony in Kentucky; and had it not been for Boone and Henderson, it is most unlikely that the land would have been settled at all until after the Revolutionary War, when perhaps it might have been British soil. Boone was essentially a type, and possesses his greatest interest for us because he represents so well the characteristics as well as the life-work of his fellow backwoodsmen; still, it is unfair not to bear in mind also the leading part he played and the great services he rendered to the nation.

The incomers soon recovered from the fright into which they had been thrown by the totally unexpected Indian attack; but the revengeful anger it excited in their breasts did not pass away. They came from a class already embittered by long warfare with their forest foes; they hoarded up their new wrongs in minds burdened with the memories of countless other outrages; and it is small wonder that repeated and often

[1] It must be remembered that the outrages of the Indians this year in Kentucky were totally unprovoked; they were on lands where they did not themselves dwell, and which had been regularly ceded to the whites by all the tribes — Iroquois, Shawnees, Cherokees, etc. — whom the whites could possibly consider as having any claim to them. The wrath of the Kentuckians against all Indians is easily understood.

unprovoked treachery at last excited in them a fierce and indiscriminate hostility to all the red-skinned race. They had come to settle on ground to which, as far as it was possible, the Indian title had been by fair treaty extinguished. They ousted no Indians from the lands they took; they had had neither the chance nor the wish to themselves do wrong; in their eyes the attack on the part of the Indians was as wanton as it was cruel; and in all probability this view was correct, and their assailants were actuated more by the desire for scalps and plunder than by resentment at the occupation of hunting-grounds to which they could have had little claim. In fact, throughout the history of the discovery and first settlement of Kentucky, the original outrages and murders were committed by the Indians on the whites, and not by the whites on the Indians. In the gloomy and ferocious wars that ensued, the wrongs done by each side were many and great.

Henderson's company came into the beautiful Kentucky country in mid-April, when it looked its best: the trees were in leaf, the air heavy with fragrance, the snowy flowers of the dogwood whitened the woods, and the banks of the streams burned dull crimson with the wealth of red-bud blossoms. The travellers reached the fort that Boone was building on the 20th of the month, being welcomed to the protection of its wooden walls by a volley from twenty or thirty rifles. They at once set to with a will to finish it, and to make it a strong place of refuge against Indian attacks. It was a typical forted village, such as the frontiersmen built everywhere in the West and Southwest during the years that they were pushing their way across the continent in the teeth of fierce and harassing warfare; in some features it was not unlike the hamlet-like "tun" in

which the forefathers of these same pioneers dwelt, long centuries before, when they still lived by the sluggish waters of the lower Rhine, or had just crossed to the eastern coast of Britain.[1]

The fort was in shape a parallelogram, some two hundred and fifty feet long and half as wide. It was more completely finished than the majority of its kind, though little or no iron was used in its construction. At each corner was a two-storied loopholed blockhouse to act as a bastion. The stout log cabins were arranged in straight lines, so that their outer sides formed part of the wall, the spaces between them being filled with a high stockade, made of heavy squared timbers thrust upright into the ground and bound together within by a horizontal stringer near the top. They were loopholed like the blockhouses. The heavy wooden gates, closed with stout bars, were flanked without by the blockhouses and within by small windows cut in the nearest cabins. The houses had sharp sloping roofs, made of huge clapboards, and these great wooden slabs were kept in place by long poles, bound with withes to the rafters. In case of dire need each cabin was separately defensible. When danger threatened, the cattle were kept in the open space in the middle.

Three other similar forts or stations were built about the same time as Boonesborough, namely: Harrodstown, Boiling Springs, and St. Asaphs, better known as Logan's Station, from its founder's name. These all lay to the southwest, some thirty-odd miles from Boonesborough. Every such fort or station served as the rallying-place for the country roundabout, the stronghold in which the people dwelt during time of danger;

[1] When the blockhouse and palisade enclosed the farm of a single settler, the "tun," in its still earlier sense, was even more nearly reproduced.

and later on, when all danger had long ceased, it often remained in changed form, growing into the chief town of the district. Each settler had his own farm besides, often a long way from the fort, and it was on this that he usually intended to make his permanent home. This system enabled the inhabitants to combine for defense, and yet to take up the large tracts of four to fourteen hundred acres[1] to which they were by law entitled. It permitted them in time of peace to live well apart, with plenty of room between, so that they did not crowd one another—a fact much appreciated by men in whose hearts the spirit of extreme independence and self-reliance was deeply ingrained. Thus the settlers were scattered over large areas, and, as elsewhere in the Southwest, the country and not the town became the governmental unit. The citizens even of the smaller governmental divisions acted through representatives, instead of directly, as in the New England town meetings.[2] The centre of county government was, of course, the county court-house.

Henderson, having established a land agency at Boonesborough, at once proceeded to deed to the Transylvania colonists entry certificates of surveys of many hundred thousand acres. Most of the colonists were rather doubtful whether these certificates would ultimately prove of any value, and preferred to rest their claims on their original cabin rights; a wise move on

[1] Four hundred acres were gained at the price of $2.50 per one hundred acres, by merely building a cabin and raising a crop of corn; and every settler with such a "cabin right" had likewise a pre-emption right to one thousand acres adjoining, for a cost that generally approached forty dollars a hundred.

[2] In Mr. Phelan's scholarly "History of Tennessee," pp. 202–204, etc., there is an admirably clear account of the way in which Tennessee institutions (like those of the rest of the Southwest) have been directly and without a break derived from English institutions; whereas many of those of New England are rather pre-Normanic revivals, curiously paralleled in England as it was before the Conquest.

their part, though in the end the Virginia legislature confirmed Henderson's sales in so far as they had been made to actual settlers. All the surveying was, of course, of the very rudest kind. Only a skilled woodsman could undertake the work in such a country; and, accordingly, much of it devolved on Boone, who ran the lines as well as he could and marked the trees with his own initials, either by powder or else with his knife.[1] The State could not undertake to make the surveys itself, so it authorized the individual settler to do so. This greatly promoted the rapid settlement of the country, making it possible to deal with land as a commodity, and outlining the various claims, but the subsequent and inevitable result was that the sons of the settlers reaped a crop of endless confusion and litigation.

It is worth mentioning that the Transylvania company opened a store at Boonesborough. Powder and lead, the two commodities most in demand, were sold respectively for $\$2.66\frac{2}{3}$ and $16\frac{2}{3}$ cents per pound. The payment was rarely made in coin; and how high the above prices were may be gathered from the fact that ordinary labor was credited at $33\frac{1}{3}$ cents per day, while fifty cents a day was paid for ranging, hunting, and working on the roads.[2]

Henderson immediately proceeded to organize the government of his colony, and accordingly issued a call for an election of delegates to the legislature of Transylvania, each of the four stations mentioned above sending members. The delegates, seventeen in all, met at Boonesborough and organized the convention on the 23d of May. Their meetings were held without the walls of the fort, on a level plain of white clover, under

[1] Boone's deposition, July 29, 1795.

[2] Mann Butler, p. 31.

a grand old elm. Beneath its mighty branches a hundred people could without crowding find refuge from the noonday sun; 'twas a fit council-house for this pioneer legislature of game-hunters and Indian fighters.[1]

These weather-beaten backwoods warriors, who held their deliberations in the open air, showed that they had in them good stuff out of which to build a free government. They were men of genuine force of character, and they behaved with a dignity and wisdom that would have well become any legislative body. Henderson, on behalf of the proprietors of Transylvania, addressed them, much as a crown governor would have done. The portion of his address dealing with the destruction of game is worth noting. Buffalo, elk, and deer had abounded immediately round Boonesborough when the settlers first arrived, but the slaughter had been so great that even after the first six weeks the hunters began to find some difficulty in getting anything without going off some fifteen or twenty miles. However, stray buffaloes were still killed near the fort once or twice a week.[2] Calk, in his journal, quoted above, in the midst of entries about his domestic work—such as, on April 29th "we git our house kivered with bark and move our things into it at Night and Begin housekeeping"; and, on May 2d, "went and sot in to clearing for corn"—mentions occasionally killing deer and turkey; and once, while looking for a strayed mare, he saw four "bofelos." He wounded one, but failed to get it, with the luck that generally attended backwoods hunters when they for the first time tried their small-bore rifles against these huge, shaggy-maned wild cattle.

[1] Henderson's journal. The beauty of the elm impressed him very greatly. According to the list of names eighteen, not seventeen, members were elected; but apparently only seventeen took part in the proceedings.

[2] Henderson's journal.

As Henderson pointed out, the game was the sole dependence of the first settlers, who, most of the time, lived solely on wild meat, even the parched corn having been exhausted; and without game the newcomers could not have stayed in the land a week.[1] Accordingly, he advised the enactment of game-laws; and he was especially severe in his comments upon the "foreignors" who came into the country merely to hunt, killing off the wild beasts and taking their skins and furs away, for the benefit of persons not concerned in the settlement. This last point is curious as showing how instantly and naturally the colonists succeeded not only to the lands of the Indians, but also to their habits of thought; regarding intrusion by outsiders upon their hunting-grounds with the same jealous dislike so often shown by their red-skinned predecessors.

Henderson also outlined some of the laws he thought it advisable to enact, and the legislature followed his advice. They provided for courts of law, for regulating the militia, for punishing criminals, fixing sheriffs' and clerks' fees, and issuing writs of attachment.[2] One of the members was a clergyman: owing to him a law was passed forbidding profane swearing or Sabbath-breaking—a puritanic touch which showed the mountain rather than the seaboard origin of the men settling Kentucky. The three remaining laws the legislature enacted were much more characteristic, and were all introduced by the two Boones—for Squire Boone was still the companion of his brother. As was fit and proper, it fell to the lot of the greatest of backwoods hunters to propose a scheme for game protection, which the legis-

[1] "Our game, the only support of life amongst many of us, and without which the country would be abandoned ere to-morrow."—Henderson's address.

[2] Journal of the Proceedings of the House of Delegates or Representatives of the Colony of Transylvania.

lature immediately adopted; and his was likewise the "act for preserving the breed of horses"—for from the very outset, the Kentuckians showed the love for fine horses and for horse-racing which has ever since distinguished them. Squire Boone was the author of a law "to protect the range"; for the preservation of the range or natural pasture over which the branded horses and cattle of the pioneers ranged at will was as necessary to the welfare of the stock as the preservation of the game was to the welfare of the men. In Kentucky the range was excellent, abounding not only in fine grass, but in cane and wild peas, and the animals grazed on it throughout the year. Fires sometimes utterly destroyed immense tracts of this pasture, causing heavy loss to the settlers; and one of the first cares of pioneer legislative bodies was to guard against such accidents.

It was likewise stipulated that there should be complete religious freedom and toleration for all sects. This seems natural enough now, but in the eighteenth century the precedents were the other way. Kentucky showed its essentially American character in nothing more than the diversity of religious belief among the settlers from the very start. They came almost entirely from the backwoods mountaineers of Virginia, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina, among whom the predominant faith had been Presbyterianism; but from the beginning they were occasionally visited by Baptist preachers,[1] whose creed spread to the borders sooner than Methodism; and among the original settlers of Harrodsburg were some Catholic Marylanders.[2] The first service ever held in Kentucky was by a clergyman of the Church of Eng-

[1] Possibly in 1775, certainly in 1776; MS. Autobiography of Rev. William Hickman, in Durrett's library.

[2] "Life of Rev. Charles Nerinckx," by Rev. Camillus P. Maes, Cincinnati, 1880, p. 67.

land, soon after Henderson's arrival; but this was merely owing to the presence of Henderson himself, who, it must be remembered, was not in the least a backwoods product. He stood completely isolated from the other immigrants during his brief existence as a pioneer, and had his real relationship with the old English founders of the proprietary colonies and with the more modern American land speculators, whose schemes are so often mentioned during the last half of the eighteenth century. Episcopacy was an exotic in the backwoods; it did not take real root in Kentucky till long after that commonwealth had emerged from the pioneer stage.

When the Transylvania legislature dissolved, never to meet again, Henderson had nearly finished playing his short but important part in the founding of Kentucky. He was a man of the seacoast regions, who had little in common with the backwoodsmen by whom he was surrounded; he came from a comparatively old and sober community, and he could not grapple with his new associates; in his journal he alludes to them as a set of scoundrels who scarcely believed in God or feared the devil. A British friend[1] of his, who at this time visited the settlement, also described the pioneers as being a lawless, narrow-minded, unpolished, and utterly insubordinate set, impatient of all restraint, and relying in every difficulty upon their individual might; though he grudgingly admitted that they were frank, hospitable, energetic, daring, and possessed of much common sense. Of course, it was hopeless to expect that such bold spirits, as they conquered the wilderness, would be content to hold it even at a small quit-rent from Henderson. But the latter's colony was toppled over by a

[1] Smyth, p. 330.

thrust from without before it had time to be rent in sunder by violence from within.

Transylvania was between two millstones. The settlers revolted against its authority and appealed to Virginia, and meanwhile Virginia, claiming the Kentucky country, and North Carolina, as mistress of the lands round the Cumberland, proclaimed the purchase of the Transylvania proprietors null and void as regards themselves, though valid as against the Indians. The title conveyed by the latter thus enured to the benefit of the colonies; it having been our policy, both before and since the Revolution, not to permit any of our citizens to individually purchase lands from the savages.

Lord Dunmore denounced Henderson and his acts; and it was in vain that the Transylvanians appealed to the Continental Congress, asking leave to send a delegate thereto, and asserting their devotion to the American cause; for Jefferson and Patrick Henry were members of that body, and, though they agreed with Lord Dunmore in nothing else, were quite as determined as he that Kentucky should remain part of Virginia. So Transylvania's fitful life flickered out of existence, the Virginia legislature in 1778 solemnly annulling the title of the company, but very properly recompensing the originators by the gift of two hundred thousand acres.[1] North Carolina pursued a precisely similar course; and Henderson, after the collapse of his colony, drifts out of history.

Boone remained, to be for some years one of the Kentucky leaders. Soon after the fort at Boonesborough was built, he went back to North Carolina for his family, and in the fall returned, bringing out a band of new set-

[1] Governor James T. Morehead's Address at Boonesborough, in 1840 (Frankfort, Ky., 1841).

tlers, including twenty-seven "guns"—that is, rifle-bearing men—and four women, with their families, the first who came to Kentucky, though others shortly followed in their steps.[1] A few roving hunters and daring pioneer settlers also came to his fort in the fall; among them, the famous scout, Simon Kenton, and John Todd,[2] a man of high and noble character and well-trained mind, who afterward fell by Boone's side when in command at the fatal battle of Blue Licks. In this year, also, Clark[3] and Shelby[4] first came to Kentucky; and many other men whose names became famous in frontier story, and whose sufferings and long wanderings, whose strength, hardihood, and fierce daring, whose prowess as Indian fighters and killers of big game, were told by the firesides of Kentucky to generations born when the elk and the buffalo had vanished from her borders as completely as the red Indian himself. Each leader gathered round him a little party of men, who helped him build the fort which was to be the stronghold of the district. Among the earliest of these town-builders were Hugh McGarry, James Harrod, and Benjamin Logan. The first named was a coarse, bold, brutal man, always clashing with his associates (he once nearly shot Harrod in a dispute over work). He was as revengeful and foolhardy as he was daring, but a natural leader in spite of all. Soon after he came to Kentucky his son was slain by Indians while out boiling sugar from the maples; and he mercilessly persecuted all redskins forever after. Harrod and Logan were of

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 51. Mrs. Boone, Mrs. Denton, Mrs. McGarry, Mrs. Hogan; all were from the North Carolina backwoods; their ancestry is shown by their names. They settled in Boonesborough and Harrodsburg.

[2] Like Logan, he was born in Pennsylvania, of Presbyterian Irish stock. He had received a good education.

[3] Morehead, p. 52.

[4] Shelby's MS. Autobiography, in Durrett's library at Louisville.

far higher character, and superior to him in every respect. Like so many other backwoodsmen, they were tall, spare, athletic men, with dark hair and grave faces. They were as fearless as they were tireless, and were beloved by their followers. Harrod finally died alone in the wilderness, nor was it ever certainly known whether he was killed by Indian or white man, or perchance by some hunted beast. The old settlers always held up his memory as that of a man ever ready to do a good deed, whether it was to run to the rescue of some one attacked by Indians, or to hunt up the strayed plough-horse of a brother settler less skilful as a woodsman; yet he could hardly read or write. Logan was almost as good a woodsman and individual fighter, and in addition was far better suited to lead men. He was both just and generous. His father had died intestate, so that all of his property by law came to Logan, who was the eldest son; but the latter at once divided it equally with his brothers and sisters. As soon as he came to Kentucky he rose to leadership, and remained for many years among the foremost of the commonwealth founders.

All this time there penetrated through the sombre forests faint echoes of the strife the men of the seacoast had just begun against the British king. The rumors woke to passionate loyalty the hearts of the pioneers; and a roaming party of hunters, when camped on a branch[1] of the Elkhorn, by the hut of one of their number, named McConnell, called the spot Lexington, in honor of the memory of the Massachusetts minutemen, about whose death and victory they had just heard.[2]

By the end of 1775 the Americans had gained firm

[1] These frontiersmen called a stream a "run," "branch," "creek," or "fork," but never a "brook," as in the Northeast.

[2] "History of Lexington," G. W. Ranck, Cincinnati, 1872, p. 19. The town was not permanently occupied till four years later.

foothold in Kentucky. Cabins had been built and clearings made; there were women and children in the wooden forts, cattle grazed on the range, and two or three hundred acres of corn had been sown and reaped. There were perhaps some three hundred men in Kentucky, a hardy, resolute, strenuous band. They stood shoulder to shoulder in the wilderness, far from all help, surrounded by an overwhelming number of foes. Each day's work was fraught with danger as they warred with the wild forces from which they wrung their living. Around them on every side lowered the clouds of the impending death-struggle with the savage lords of the neighboring lands.

These backwoodsmen greatly resembled one another; their leaders were but types of the rank and file, and did not differ so very widely from them; yet two men stand out clearly from their fellows. Above the throng of wood-choppers, game-hunters, and Indian fighters loom the sinewy figures of Daniel Boone and George Rogers Clark.

CHAPTER XI

IN THE CURRENT OF THE REVOLUTION—THE SOUTHERN BACKWOODSMEN OVERWHELM THE CHEROKEES

1776

The great Western drift of our people began almost at the moment when they became Americans, and ceased to be merely British colonists. They crossed the great divide which sundered the springs of the seaboard rivers from the sources of the Western waters about the time that American citizens first publicly acted as American freemen, knit together by common ties and with interests no longer akin to those of the mother country. The movement which was to make the future nation a continental power was begun immediately after the hitherto separate colonies had taken the first step toward solidification. While the communities of the seacoast were yet in a fever-heat from the uprising against the stamp tax, the first explorers were toiling painfully to Kentucky, and the first settlers were building their palisaded hamlets on the banks of the Watauga. The year that saw the first Continental Congress saw also the short, grim tragedy of Lord Dunmore's war. The early battles of the Revolution were fought while Boone's comrades were laying the foundations of their commonwealth.

Hitherto the two chains of events had been only remotely connected; but in 1776, the year of the Declaration of Independence, the struggle between the king and his rebellious subjects shook the whole land, and

the men of the Western border were drawn headlong into the full current of Revolutionary warfare. From that moment our politics became national, and the fate of each portion of our country was thenceforth in some sort dependent upon the welfare of every other. Each section had its own work to do; the East won independence while the West began to conquer the continent. Yet the deeds of each were of vital consequence to the other. Washington's Continentals gave the West its freedom; and took in return for themselves and their children a share of the land that had been conquered and held by the scanty bands of tall backwoodsmen.

The backwoodsmen, the men of the up-country, were, as a whole, ardent adherents of the patriot or American side. Yet there were among them many Loyalists or Tories; and these Tories included in their ranks much the greatest portion of the vicious and the disorderly elements. This was the direct reverse of what obtained along portions of the seaboard, where large numbers of the peaceable, well-to-do people stood loyally by the king. In the up-country, however, the Presbyterian Irish, with their fellows of Calvinistic stock and faith, formed the backbone of the moral and order-loving element; and the Presbyterian Irish[1] were almost to a man stanch and furious upholders of the Continental Congress. Naturally, the large bands of murderers, horse thieves, and other wild outlaws, whom these grim friends of order hunted down with merciless severity, were glad to throw in their lot with any party that promised revenge upon their foes. But of course there were lawless characters on both sides; in certain localities, where the crop of jealousies, always a rank back-

[1] Mr. Phelan, in his "History of Tennessee," deserves especial praise for having so clearly understood the part played by the Scotch-Irish.

woods growth, had been unusually large, and had therefore produced long-standing and bitter feuds,[1] the rival families espoused opposite sides from sheer vindictive hatred of one another. As a result, the struggle in the backwoods between Tories and Whigs, King's-men and Congress-men,[2] did not merely turn upon the questions everywhere at stake between the American and British parties. It was also in part a fight between the law-abiding and the lawless, and in part a slaking of savage personal animosities, wherein the borderers glutted their vengeance on one another. They exercised without restraint the right of private warfare, long abandoned in more civilized regions. It was natural that such a contest should be waged with appalling ferocity.

Nevertheless this very ferocity was not only inevitable, but it was in a certain sense proper; or, at least, even if many of its manifestations were blamable, the spirit that lay behind them was right. The backwoodsmen were no sentimentalists; they were grim, hard, matter-of-fact men, engaged all their lives long in an unending struggle with hostile forces, both human and natural; men who in this struggle had acquired many unamiable qualities, but who had learnèd likewise to appreciate at their full value the inestimable virtues of courage and common sense. The crisis demanded that they should be both strong and good; but, above all things, it demanded that they should be strong. Weakness would have ruined them. It was needful that justice should stand before mercy; and they could no longer have held their homes, had they not put down their foes, of every kind, with an iron hand. They did not have

[1] The Campbell MSS. contain allusions to various such feuds and accounts of the jealousies existing not only between families, but between prominent members of the same family.

[2] See Milfort, Smyth, etc., as well as the native writers.

many theories; but they were too genuinely liberty-loving not to keenly feel that their freedom was jeopardized as much by domestic disorder as by foreign aggression.

The Tories were obnoxious under two heads: they were the allies of a tyrant who lived beyond the sea, and they were the friends of anarchy at home. They were felt by the frontiersmen to be criminals rather than ordinary foes. They included in their ranks the mass of men who had been guilty of the two worst frontier crimes—horse-stealing and murder; and their own feats were in the eyes of their neighbors in no way distinguishable from those of other horse thieves and murderers. Accordingly, the backwoodsmen soon grew to regard Toryism as merely another crime; and the courts sometimes executed equally summary justice on Tory, desperado, and stock thief, holding each as having forfeited his life.[1]

The backwoodsmen were engaged in a threefold contest. In the first place, they were occasionally, but not often, opposed to the hired British and German soldiers of a foreign king. Next, they were engaged in a fierce civil war with the Tories of their own number. Finally, they were pitted against the Indians, in the ceaseless border struggle of a rude, vigorous civilization to overcome an inevitably hostile savagery. The regular British armies, marching to and fro in the course of their long campaigns on the seaboard, rarely went far enough back to threaten the frontiersmen; the latter had to do chiefly with Tories led by British chiefs, and with Indians instigated by British agents.

[1] Executions for "treason," murder, and horse-stealing were very common. For an instance where the three crimes were treated alike as deserving the death penalty the perpetrators being hung, see Calendar of "Virginia State Papers," vol. III, p. 361.

Soon after the conflict with the revolted colonists became one of arms as well as one of opinions, the British began to rouse the Indian tribes to take their part. In the Northwest they were at first unsuccessful; the memory of Lord Dunmore's war was still fresh in the minds of the tribes beyond the Ohio, and they remained for the most part neutral. The Shawnees continued even in 1776 to send in to the Americans white prisoners collected from among their outlying bands, in accordance with the terms of the treaty entered into on the Pickaway plains.[1]

But the southwestern Indians were not held in check by memories of recent defeat, and they were alarmed by the encroachments of the whites. Although the Cherokees had regularly ceded to the Watauga settlers their land, they still continued jealous of them; and both Creeks and Cherokees were much irritated at the conduct of some of the lawless Georgian frontiersmen.[2] The colonial authorities tried to put a stop to this lawlessness, and one of the chief offenders was actually seized and hung in the presence of two Indians.[3] This had a momentary effect on the Creeks, and induced them for the time being to observe a kind of nominal neutrality, though they still furnished bodies of warriors to help the British and Cherokees.[4]

The latter, however, who were the nearest neighbors of the Americans, promptly took up the tomahawk at the bidding of the British. The royal agents among these Southern Indians had so far successfully[5] followed

[1] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. VI, p. 541. But parties of young braves went on the war-path from time to time.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 790.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. VI, p. 1228.

[4] See Milfort, pp. 46, 134, etc.

[5] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. I, p. 1094, for example of fight between Choctaws and Creeks.

the perfectly cold-blooded though perhaps necessary policy of exciting the tribes to war with one another, in order that they might leave the whites at peace; but now, as they officially reported to the British commander, General Gage, they deemed this course no longer wise, and, instead of fomenting, they endeavored to allay, the strife between the Chickasaws and Creeks, so as to allow the latter to turn their full strength against the Georgians.[1] At the same time every effort was made to induce the Cherokees to rise,[2] and they were promised gunpowder, blankets, and the like[3] although some of the promised stores were seized by the Americans while being forwarded to the Indians.[4]

In short, the British were active and successful in rousing the war spirit among Creeks, Cherokees, Choctaws, and Chickasaws, having numerous agents in all these tribes.[5] Their success, and the consequent ravages of the Indians, maddened the American frontiersmen upon whom the blow fell, and changed their resentment against the British king into a deadly and lasting hatred, which their sons and grandsons inherited. Indian warfare was of such peculiar atrocity that the employment of Indians as allies forbade any further hope of reconciliation. It is not necessary to accept the American estimate of the motives inspiring the act in order to sympathize fully with the horror and anger that it aroused among the frontiersmen. They saw their

[1] *Ibid.*, vol. IV, p. 317. Letter of Agent John Stuart to General Gage, St. Augustine, October 3, 1775.

[2] State Department MSS., No. 71, vol. II, p. 189. Letter of David Taitt, Deputy Superintendent (of British) in Creek nation.

[3] "American Archives," vol. III, p. 218, August 21, 1775.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 790, September 25, 1775.

[5] State Department MSS., No. 51, vol. II, p. 17 (volume of "Intercepted Letters"). Letters of Andrew Rainsford, John Mitchell, and Alexander McCullough, to Rt. Hon. Lord George Germain.

homes destroyed, their wives outraged, their children captured, their friends butchered and tortured wholesale by Indians armed with British weapons, bribed by British gold, and obeying the orders of British agents and commanders. Their stormy anger was not likely to be allayed by the consideration that Congress also had at first made some effort to enlist Indians in the patriot forces, nor were they apt to bear in mind the fact that the British, instead of being abnormally cruel, were in reality less so than our former French and Spanish opponents.[1]

Looking back, it is easy to see that the Indians were the natural foes of the American people, and therefore the natural allies of the British Government. They had constantly to fear the advance of the Americans, while from the fur traders, Indian agents, and army officers who alone represented Britain, they had nothing but coveted treasures of every kind to expect. They seemed tools forged for the hands of the royal commanders, whose own people lay far beyond the reach of reprisals in kind; and it was perhaps too much to expect that in that age such tools should not be used.[2] We had less temptation to employ them, less means wherewith to pay them, and more cause to be hostile to and dread them; and moreover our skirts are not quite clear in the matter, after all, for we more than once showed a tendency to bid for their support.

[1] No body of British troops in the Revolution bore such a dark stain on its laurels as the massacre at Fort William Henry left on the banners of Montcalm; even the French, not to speak of the Spaniards and Mexicans, were to us far more cruel foes than the British, though generally less formidable. In fact the British, as conquerors and rulers in America, though very disagreeable, have not usually been either needlessly cruel nor (relatively speaking) unjust, and compare rather favorably with most other European nations.

[2] Though it must be remembered that in our own war with Mexico we declined the proffered — and valuable — aid of the Comanches.

But, after all is said, the fact remains that we have to deal, not with what, under other circumstances, the Americans *might* have done, but with what the British actually *did;* and for this there can be many apologies, but no sufficient excuse. When the commissioners to the Southern Indians wrote to Lord George Germain, "we have been indefatigable in our endeavors to keep up a constant succession of parties of Indians to annoy the rebels,"[1] the writers must have well known, what the king's ministers should also have made it their business to know, that the war-parties whom they thus boasted of continually sending against the settlements directed their efforts mainly, indeed almost exclusively, not against bodies of armed men, but against the husbandmen as they unsuspectingly tilled the fields, and against the women and children who cowered helplessly in the log cabins. All men knew that the prisoners who fell into Indian hands, of whatever age or sex, often suffered a fate hideous and revolting beyond description. Such a letter as that quoted above makes the advisers of King George the Third directly responsible for the manifold and frightful crimes of their red allies.

It is small wonder that such a contest should have roused in the breasts of the frontiersmen not only ruthless and undying abhorrence of the Indians, but also a bitterly vindictive feeling of hostility toward Great Britain; a feeling that was all-powerful for a generation afterward, and traces of which linger even to the present day. Moreover, the Indian forays, in some ways, damaged the Loyalist cause. The savages had received strict instructions not to molest any of the king's friends;[2] but they were far too intent on plunder and

[1] State Department MSS. "Intercepted Letters," Pensacola, July 12, 1779.
[2] *Ibid.*

rapine to discriminate between Whig and Tory. Accordingly, their ravages drove the best Tories, who had at first hailed the Indian advance with joy, into the patriot ranks,[1] making the frontier almost solidly Whig; save for the refugees, who were willing to cast in their lot with the savages.

While the Creeks were halting and considering, and while the Choctaws and Chickasaws were being visited by British emissaries, the Cherokees flung themselves on the frontier folk. They had been short of ammunition; but when the British agents[2] sent them fifty horse-loads[3] by a pack-train that was driven through the Creek towns, they no longer hesitated. The agents showed very poor generalship in making them rise so early, when there were no British troops in the Southern States,[4] and when the Americans were consequently unhampered and free to deal with the Indians. Had the rising been put off until a British army was in Georgia, it might well have proved successful.

The Cherokee villages stood in that cluster of high mountain chains which mark the ending of the present boundaries of Georgia and both Carolinas. These provinces lay east and southeast of them. Directly north were the forted villages of the Watauga pioneers, in the valley of the upper Tennessee, and beyond these again, in the same valley, the Virginian outpost settlements. Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia were alike threatened by the outbreak, while the Watauga people were certain to be the chief sufferers. The Cherokees were so near the settlements that their

[1] "American Archives," 5th Series, I, 610.

[2] Stuart and Cameron; the latter dwelt among them, and excited them to war.

[3] "American Archives," 5th Series, III, 649.

[4] The only British attempt made at that time against the Southern colonies was in too small force, and failed.

incursions were doubly dangerous. On the other hand, there was not nearly as much difficulty in dealing them a counter-blow as in the case of the Northern Indians, for their towns lay thickly together and were comparatively easy of access. Moreover, they were not rated such formidable fighters. By comparing Lord Dunmore's war in 1774 with this struggle against the Cherokees in 1776, it is easy to see the difference between a contest against the Northern and one against the Southern tribes. In 1776, our Indian foes were more numerous than in 1774, for there were over two thousand Cherokee warriors—perhaps two thousand five hundred —assisted by a few Creeks and Tories; they were closer to the frontier, and so their ravages were more serious; but they did not prove such redoubtable foes as Cornstalk's warriors, their villages were easier reached, and a more telling punishment was inflicted.

The Cherokees had been showing signs of hostility for some time. They had murdered two Virginians the previous year;[1] and word was brought to the settlements, early in the summer of '76, that they were undoubtedly preparing for war, as they were mending guns, making moccasins, and beating flour for the march.[2] In June, their ravages began.[3] The Otari, or Overhill Cherokees, had sent runners to the valley towns, asking their people to wait until all were ready before marching, that the settlements might be struck simultaneously; but some of the young braves among the lower towns could not be restrained, and in consequence the outlying settlers of Georgia and the Carolinas were the first to be assailed.

The main attack was made early in July, the warriors

[1] "American Archives," 4th Series, vol. III, p. 1112.
[2] *Ibid.*, 5th Series, vol. I, p. 111. [3] *Ibid.*, 4th Series, vol. VI, p. 1229.

rushing down from their upland fastnesses in fierce and headlong haste, the different bands marching north, east, and southeast at the same moment. From the Holston to the Tugelou, from southwestern Virginia to northwestern Georgia, the back-county settlements were instantly wrapped in the sudden horror of savage warfare.

The Watauga people, the most exposed of all, received timely warning from a friendly squaw,[1] to whom the whites ever after showed respect and gratitude. They at once began to prepare for the stroke; and in all the Western world of woodsmen there were no men better fitted for such a death-grapple. They still formed a typical pioneer community; and their number had been swelled from time to time by the arrival of other bold and restless spirits. Their westernmost settlement this year was in Carter's Valley; where four men had cleared a few acres of corn land, and had hunted buffalo for their winter's meat.[2]

As soon as they learned definitely that the Otari warriors, some seven hundred in number, were marching against them, they took refuge in their wooden forts or stations. Among the most important of these were the one at Watauga, in which Sevier and Robertson held command, and another known as Eaton's Station,[3] placed just above the forks of the Holston. Some six miles from the latter, near the Long Island or Big Island of the Holston, lay quite a large tract of level land, cov-

[1] Her name was Nancy Ward. Campbell MSS., Haywood, etc.

[2] Ramsey, 144. The buffalo were killed (winter of 1775–1776) twelve miles northeast of Carter's Valley.

[3] Haywood and his followers erroneously call it Heaton's; in the Campbell MSS., as well as in the "American Archives," 5th Series, I, p. 464, it is called Eaton's or Amos Eaton's. This is contemporary authority. Other forts were Evan Shelby's, John Shelby's, Campbell's, the Wommack fort, etc.

ered with an open growth of saplings, and known as the Island flats.

The Indians were divided into several bands; some of their number crossed over into Carter's Valley, and after ravaging it, passed on up the Clinch. The settlers at once gathered in the little stockades; those who delayed were surprised by the savages, and were slain as they fled, or else were captured, perhaps to die by torture—men, women, and children alike. The cabins were burnt, the grain destroyed, the cattle and horses driven off, and the sheep and hogs shot down with arrows; the Indians carried bows and arrows for this express purpose, so as to avoid wasting powder and lead. The bolder war-parties, in their search for scalps, penetrated into Virginia a hundred miles beyond the frontier,[1] wasting the country with tomahawk and brand up to the Seven-Mile Ford. The roads leading to the wooden forts were crowded with settlers, who, in their mortal need of hurry, had barely time to snatch up a few of the household goods, and, if especially lucky, to mount the women and children on horses; as usual in such a flight, there occurred many deeds of cowardly selfishness, offset by many feats of courage and self-sacrifice. Once in the fort, the backwoodsmen often banded into parties, and sallied out to fall on the Indians. Sometimes these parties were worsted; at other times they overcame their foes either by ambush or in fair fight. One such party from the Wolf Hills fort killed eleven Indian warriors; and on their return they hung the scalps of their slain foes, as trophies of triumph, from a pole over the fort gate.[2] They were

[1] "American Archives," 5th Series, I, 973.

[2] "American Pioneers," I, 534. Letter of Benjamin Sharp, who was in the fort at the time as a boy fourteen years old.

Bible-readers in this fort, and they had their Presbyterian minister with them, having organized a special party to bring in the books he had left in his cabin; they joined in prayer and thanksgiving for their successes; but this did not hinder them from scalping the men they killed. They were too well read in the merciless wars of the Chosen People to feel the need of sparing the fallen; indeed, they would have been most foolish had they done so; for they were battling with a heathen enemy more ruthless and terrible than ever was Canaanite or Philistine.

The two largest of the invading Indian bands[1] moved, one by way of the mountains, to fall on the Watauga fort and its neighbors, and the other, led by the great war-chief, Dragging Canoe, to lay waste the country guarded by Eaton's Station.

The white scouts—trained woodsmen, whose lives had been spent in the chase and in forest warfare—kept the commanders or head men of the forts well informed of the Indian advance. As soon as it was known what part was really threatened, runners were sent to the settlements near by, calling on the riflemen to gather at Eaton's Station; whither they accordingly came in small bodies, under their respective militia captains.[2]

No man was really in command; the senior captain exercised a vague kind of right of advice over the others, and the latter in turn got from their men such obedience as their own personal influence was able to procure.

[1] Many writers speak as if all the Indians were in these two bands, which was not so. It is impossible to give their numbers exactly; probably each contained from 150 to 300 warriors.

[2] James Thompson, James Shelby, William Buchanan, John Campbell, William Cocke, and Thomas Madison. See their letter of August 2, 1776, "American Archives," 5th Series, I, 464. Haywood, relying on tradition, says five companies gathered; he is invaluable as an authority, but it must be kept in mind that he often relies on traditional statement.

But the levy, if disorderly, was composed of excellent marksmen and woodsmen, sinewy, hardy, full of fight, and accustomed to act together. A council was held, and it was decided not to stay cooped up in the fort, like turkeys in a pen, while the Indians ravaged the fields and burnt the homesteads, but to march out at once and break the shock by a counter-stroke.

Accordingly, on the morning of the 20th of July, they filed out of the fort, one hundred and seventy strong, and bent their steps toward the Island Flats. Well versed in woodland warfare, the frontier riflemen marched as well as fought on a system of their own, much more effective for this purpose than the discipline of European regulars. The men of this little levy walked strung out in Indian file, in two parallel lines,[1] with scouts in front, and flankers on each side. Marching thus they could not be surprised, and were ready at any moment to do battle with the Indians, in open order and taking shelter behind the trees; while regulars, crowded together, were helpless before the savages whom the forest screened from view, and who esteemed it an easy task to overcome any number of foes if gathered in a huddle.[2]

When near the Flats the whites, walking silently with moccasined feet, came suddenly on a party of twenty Indians, who, on being attacked, fled in the utmost haste, leaving behind ten of their bundles—for the Southern warriors carried with them, when on the war-path, small bundles containing their few necessaries.

After this trifling success a council was held, and, as

[1] The report of the six captains says "two divisions"; from Haywood we learn that the two divisions were two lines, evidently marching side by side, there being a right line and a left line.

[2] See James Smith, *passim*.

the day was drawing to a close, it was decided to return to the fort. Some of the men were dissatisfied with the decision, and there followed an incident as characteristic in its way as was the bravery with which the battle was subsequently fought. The discontented soldiers expressed their feelings freely, commenting especially upon the supposed lack of courage on the part of one of the captains. The latter, after brooding over the matter until the men had begun to march off the ground toward home, suddenly halted the line in which he was walking, and proceeded to harangue the troops in defense of his own reputation. Apparently no one interfered to prevent this remarkable piece of military self-justification; the soldiers were evidently accustomed openly to criticise the conduct of their commanders, while the latter responded in any manner they saw fit. As soon as the address was over, and the lines once more straightened out, the march was renewed in the original order; and immediately afterward the scouts brought news that a considerable body of Indians, misled by their retreat, was running rapidly up to assail their rear.[1]

The right file was promptly wheeled to the right and the left to the left, forming a line of battle a quarter of a mile long, the men taking advantage of the cover when possible. There was at first some confusion and a momentary panic, which was instantly quelled, the officers and many of the men joining to encourage and rally the few whom the suddenness of the attack rendered faint-hearted. The Otari warriors, instead of showing the usual Indian caution, came running on at headlong speed, believing that the whites were fleeing

[1] Among the later Campbell MSS. are a number of copies of papers containing traditional accounts of this battle. They are mostly very incorrect, both as to the numbers and losses of the Indians and whites, and as to the battle itself very little help can be derived from them.

in terror; while still some three hundred yards off[1] they raised the war-whoop and charged without halting, the foremost chiefs hallooing out that the white men were running, and to come on and scalp them. They were led by Dragging Canoe himself, and were formed very curiously, their centre being cone-shaped, while their wings were curved outward; apparently they believed the white line to be wavering, and hoped to break through its middle at the same time that they outflanked it, trusting to a single furious onset instead of to their usual tactics.[2] The result showed their folly. The frontiersmen on the right and left scattered out still farther, so that their line could not be outflanked; and waiting coolly till the Otari were close up, the whites fired into them. The long rifles cracked like four-horse whips; they were held in skilful hands, many of the assailants fell, and the rush was checked at once. A short fight at close quarters ensued here and there along the line, Dragging Canoe was struck down and severely wounded, and then the Indians fled in the utmost confusion, every man for himself. Yet they carried off their wounded and perhaps some of their dead. The whites took thirteen scalps, and of their own number but four were seriously hurt; they also took many guns and much plunder.

In this battle of the Island Flats[3] the whites were slightly superior[4] in number to their foes; and they won

[1] Campbell MSS. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] Tennessee historians sometimes call it the battle of Long Island; which confuses it with Washington's defeat of about the same date.

[4] The captains' report says the Indians were "not inferior" in numbers; they probably put them at a maximum. Haywood and all later writers greatly exaggerate the Indian numbers; as also their losses, which are commonly placed at "over 40," "26 being left dead on the ground." In reality only thirteen were so left; but in the various skirmishes on the Watauga about this time, from the middle of July to the middle of August, the backwoodsmen took in all twenty-six scalps and one prisoner ("American Archives," 5th Series, I, 973). This is probably the origin

without difficulty, inflicting a far heavier loss than they received. In this respect it differs markedly from most other Indian fights of the same time; and many of its particulars render it noteworthy. Moreover, it had a very good effect, cheering the frontiersmen greatly, and enabling them to make head against the discouraged Indians.

On the same day the Watauga fort[1] was attacked by a large force at sunrise. It was crowded with women and children,[2] but contained only forty or fifty men. The latter, however, were not only resolute and well armed, but were also on the alert to guard against surprise; the Indians were discovered as they advanced in the gray light, and were at once beaten back with loss from the loopholed stockade. Robertson commanded in the fort, Sevier acting as his lieutenant. Of course, the only hope of assistance was from Virginia, North Carolina being separated from the Watauga people by great mountain chains; and Sevier had already notified

of the "26 dead" story; the "over 40" being merely a flourish. Ramsey gives a story about Isaac Shelby rallying the whites to victory, and later writers, of course, follow and embellish this; but Shelby's MS. Autobiography (see copy in Colonel Durrett's library at Louisville) not only makes no mention of the battle, but states that Shelby was at this time in Kentucky; he came back in August or September, and so was hundreds of miles from the place when the battle occurred. Ramsey gives a number of anecdotes of ferocious personal encounters that took place during the battle. Some of them are of very doubtful value—for instance, that of the man who killed six of the most daring Indians himself (the total number killed being only thirteen), and the account of the Indians all retreating when they saw another of their champions vanquished. The climax of absurdity is reached by a recent writer, Mr. Kirke, who, after embodying in his account all the errors of his predecessors and adding several others on his own responsibility, winds up by stating that "two hundred and ten men under Sevier and [Isaac] Shelby . . . beat back . . . fifteen thousand Indians." These numbers can only be reached by comparing an exaggerated estimate of all the Cherokees, men, women, and children, with the white men encountered by a very small proportion of the red warriors in the first two skirmishes. Moreover, as already shown, Shelby was nowhere near the scene of conflict, and Sevier was acting as Robertson's subaltern.

[1] Another fort, called Fort Lee, had been previously held by Sevier, but had been abandoned. See Phelan, p. 42.

[2] "American Archives," 5th Series, I, 973; 500 women and children.

the officers of Fincastle that the Indians were advancing. His letter was of laconic brevity, and contained no demand for help; it was merely a warning that the Indians were undoubtedly about to start, and that "they intended to drive the country up to New River before they returned"—so that it behooved the Fincastle men to look to their own hearthsides. Sevier was a very fearless, self-reliant man, and doubtless felt confident that the settlers themselves could beat back their assailants. His forecast proved correct; for the Indians, after maintaining an irregular siege of the fort for some three weeks, retired, almost at the moment that parties of frontiersmen came to the rescue from some of the neighboring forts.[1]

While the foe was still lurking about the fort the people within were forced to subsist solely on parched corn; and from time to time some of them became so irritated by the irksome monotony of their confinement, that they ventured out heedless of the danger. Three or four of them were killed by the Indians, and one boy was carried off to one of their towns, where he was burnt at the stake; while a woman, who was also captured at this time, was only saved from a like fate by the exertions of the same Cherokee squaw already mentioned as warning the settlers. Tradition relates that Sevier, now a young widower, fell in love with the woman he soon afterward married during the siege. Her name was Kate Sherrill. She was a tall girl, brown-haired, comely, lithe, and supple "as a hickory sapling." One day while without the fort she was almost surprised by some Indians. Running like a deer, she reached the

[1] Campbell MSS. Haywood says that the first help came from Evan Shelby; Colonel Russell, at Eaton's Station, proving dilatory. In the Campbell MSS. are some late letters written by sons of the Captain Campbell who took part in the Island Flats fight, denying this statement.

stockade, sprang up so as to catch the top with her hands, and drawing herself over was caught in Sevier's arms on the other side; through a loophole he had already shot the headmost of her pursuers.

Soon after the baffled Otari retreated from Robertson's fort the other war-parties likewise left the settlements. The Watauga men, together with the immediately adjoining Virginian frontiersmen, had beaten back their foes unaided, save for some powder and lead they had received from the older settlements; and, moreover, had inflicted more loss than they suffered.[1] They had made an exceedingly vigorous and successful fight.

The outlying settlements scattered along the western border of the Carolinas and Georgia had been attacked somewhat earlier; the Cherokees from the lower towns, accompanied by some Creeks and Tories, beginning their ravages in the last days of June.[2] A small party of Georgians had, just previously, made a sudden march into the Cherokee country. They were trying to capture the British agent Cameron, who, being married to an Indian wife, dwelt in her town, and owned many negroes, horses, and cattle. The Cherokees, who had agreed not to interfere, broke faith and surprised the party, killing some and capturing others, who were tortured to death.[3]

The frontiers were soon in a state of wild panic; for the Cherokee inroad was marked by the usual features. Cattle were driven off, houses burned, plantations laid waste, while the women and children were massacred

[1] "American Archives," 5th Series, I, 973. Of the Watauga settlers eighteen men, two women, and several children had been killed; two or three were taken captive. Of the Indians twenty-six were scalped: doubtless several others were slain. Of course, these figures only apply to the Watauga neighborhood.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 611. [3] "History of Georgia," Hugh McCall, Savannah, 1816, p. 76.

indiscriminately with the men.[1] The people fled from their homes and crowded into the stockade forts; they were greatly hampered by the scarcity of guns and ammunition, as much had been given to the troops called down to the coast by the war with Britain. All the Southern colonies were maddened by the outbreak, and prepared for immediate revenge, knowing that if they were quick they would have time to give the Cherokees a good drubbing before the British could interfere.[2] The plan was that they should act together, the Virginians invading the Overhill country at the same time that the forces from North and South Carolina and Georgia destroyed the valley and lower towns. Thus the Cherokees would be crushed with little danger. It proved impossible, however, to get the attacks made quite simultaneously.

The back districts of North Carolina suffered heavily at the outset; however, the inhabitants showed that they were able to take care of themselves. The Cherokees came down the Catawba, murdering many people; but most of the whites took refuge in the little forts, where they easily withstood the Indian assaults. General Griffith Rutherford raised a frontier levy and soon relieved the besieged stations. He sent word to the provincial authorities that if they could only get powder and lead, the men of the Salisbury district were alone quite capable of beating off the Indians, but that if it was intended to invade the Cherokee country he must also have help from the Hillsborough men.[3] He was promised assistance, and was told to prepare a force to act on the offensive with the Virginians and South Carolinians.

[1] "American Archives," 5th Series, I, 610.
[2] *Ibid.*, 4th Series, VI, 1228.
[3] *Ibid.*, 5th Series, I, 613.

Before he could get ready the first counterblow had been struck by Georgia and South Carolina. Georgia was the weakest of all the colonies, and the part it played in this war was but trifling. It was threatened by British cruisers along the coast, and by the Tories of Florida; and there was constant danger of an uprising of the black slaves, who outnumbered the whites. The vast herds of cattle and great rice-plantations of the South offered a tempting bait to every foe. Tories were numerous in the population, while there were incessant bickerings with the Creeks, frequently resulting in small local wars, brought on as often by the faithlessness and brutality of the white borderers as by the treachery and cruelty of the red. Indeed, the Indians were only kept quiet by presents, it being an unhappy feature of the frontier troubles that while lawless whites could not be prevented from encroaching on the Indian lands, the Indians in turn could only be kept at peace with the law-abiding by being bribed.[1]

Only a small number of warriors invaded Georgia. Nevertheless they greatly harassed the settlers, capturing several families and fighting two or three skirmishes with varying results.[2] By the middle of July, Colonel Samuel Jack[3] took the field with a force of two hundred rangers, all young men, the old and infirm being left to guard the forts. The Indians fled as soon as he had embodied his troops, and toward the end of the month he marched against one or two of their small lower towns, which he burned, destroying the grain and driving off

[1] *Ibid.*, 5th Series, I, 7, and III, 649. The Georgia frontiersmen seem to have been peculiarly brutal in their conduct to the Creeks; but the latter were themselves very little, if at all, better.

[2] McCall. Five families captured; in three skirmishes eight whites were killed and six Indian scalps taken.

[3] *Ibid.* The Tennessee historians erroneously assign the command to Colonel McBury.

the cattle. No resistance was offered, and he did not lose a man.

The heaviest blow fell on South Carolina, where the Cherokees were led by Cameron himself, accompanied by most of his Tories. Some of his warriors came from the lower towns that lay along the Tugelou and Keowee, but most were from the middle towns, in the neighborhood of the Tellico, and from the valley towns that lay well to the westward of these, among the mountains, along the branches of the Hiawassee and Chattahoochee rivers. Falling furiously on the scattered settlers, they killed them or drove them into the wooden forts, ravaging, burning, and murdering as elsewhere, and sparing neither age nor sex. Colonel Andrew Williamson was in command of the western districts, and he at once began to gather together a force, taking his station at Pickens's fort, with forty men, on July 3d.[1] It was with the utmost difficulty that he could get troops, guns, or ammunition; but his strenuous and unceasing efforts were successful, and his force increased day by day. It is worth noting that these lowland troops were for the most part armed with smooth-bores, unlike the rifle-bearing mountaineers. As soon as he could muster a couple of hundred men,[2] he left the fort and advanced toward the Indians, making continual halts,[3] so as to allow the numerous volunteers that were flocking to his standard to reach him. At the same time the Americans were much encouraged by the repulse of an assault made just before daylight on one of the forts.[4] The attacking party was some two hundred strong, half

[1] "View of South Carolina," John Drayton, Charleston, 1802, p. 231. A very good book.

[2] More exactly, 222, on the 8th of July.

[3] *E. g.*, at Hogskin Creek and Barker's Creek.

[4] Lyndley's fort, on Rayborn Creek.

of them being white men, naked and painted like the Indians; but after dark, on the evening before the attack, a band of one hundred and fifty American militia, on their way to join Williamson, entered the fort. The assault was made before dawn; it was promptly repulsed, and at daybreak the enemy fled, having suffered some loss; thirteen of the Tories were captured, but the more nimble Indians escaped.

By the end of July, Williamson had gathered over eleven hundred militia[1] (including two small rifle companies), and advanced against the Indian towns, sending his spies and scouts before him. On the last day of the month he made a rapid night march, with three hundred and fifty horsemen, to surprise Cameron, who lay with a party of Tories and Indians, encamped at Oconoree Creek, beyond the Cherokee town of Eseneka, which commanded the ford of the River Keowee. The cabins and fenced gardens of the town lay on both sides of the river. Williamson had been told by his prisoners that the hither bank was deserted, and advanced heedlessly, without scouts or flankers. In consequence, he fell into an ambush, for when he reached the first houses, hidden Indians suddenly fired on him from front and flank. Many horses, including that of the commander, were shot down, and the startled troops began a disorderly retreat, firing at random. Colonel Hammond rallied about twenty of the coolest, and ordering them to reserve their fire, he charged the fence from behind which the heaviest hostile fire came. When up to it they shot into the dark figures crouching behind it, and jumping over charged home. The Indians immediately fled, leaving one dead and three wounded in the hands

[1] Eleven hundred and fifty-one, of whom one hundred and thirty were riflemen. He was camped at Twenty-three Mile Creek.

of the whites. The action was over; but the by-no-means-reassured victors had lost five men mortally and thirteen severely wounded, and were still rather nervous. At daybreak, Williamson destroyed the houses near by, and started to cross the ford. But his men, in true militia style, had become sulky and mutinous, and refused to cross, until Colonel Hammond swore he would go alone, and plunged into the river, followed by three volunteers, whereupon the whole army crowded after. The revulsion in their feelings was instantaneous; once across they seemed to have left all fear as well as all prudence behind. On the hither side there had been no getting them to advance; on the farther there was no keeping them together, and they scattered everywhere. Luckily the Indians were too few to retaliate; and, besides, the Cherokees were not good marksmen, using so little powder in their guns that they made very ineffective weapons. After all the houses had been burned, and some six thousand bushels of corn, besides peas and beans, destroyed, Williamson returned to his camp. Next day he renewed his advance, and sent out detachments against all the other lower towns, utterly destroying every one by the middle of August, although not without one or two smart skirmishes.[1] His troops were very much elated, and only the lack of provisions prevented his marching against the middle towns. As it was, he retired to refit, leaving a garrison of six hundred men at Eseneka, which he christened Fort Rutledge. This ended the first stage of the retaliatory campaign, undertaken by the whites in revenge for the outbreak. The South Carolinians, assisted slightly by a

[1] At Tomassee, where he put to flight a body of two or three hundred warriors, he lost eight killed and fifteen wounded; and at Tugelou, four wounded. Besides these two towns, he also destroyed Soconee, Keowee, Ostatay, Chehokee, Eustustie, Sugaw Town, and Brass Town.

small independent command of Georgians, who acted separately, had destroyed the lower Cherokee towns, at the same time that the Watauga people repulsed the attack of the Overhill warriors.

The second and most important movement was to be made by South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia jointly, each sending a column of two thousand men,[1] the two former against the middle and valley, the latter against the Overhill towns. If the columns acted together the Cherokees would be overwhelmed by a force three times the number of all their warriors. The plan succeeded well, although the Virginia division was delayed, so that its action, though no less effective, was much later than that of the others, and though the latter likewise failed to act in perfect unison.

Rutherford and his North Carolinians were the first to take the field.[2] He had an army of two thousand gunmen, besides pack-horsemen and men to tend the drove of bullocks, together with a few Catawba Indians —a total of twenty-four hundred.[3] On September 1st he left the head of the Catawba,[4] and the route he followed was long known by the name of Rutherford's trace. There was not a tent in his army, and but very few blankets; the pack-horses carried the flour, while the beef was driven along on the hoof. Officers and men alike wore homespun hunting-shirts trimmed with

[1] All militia, of course, with only the training they had received on the rare muster days; but a warlike set, utterly unlike ordinary militia, and for woodland work against savages in many respects much superior to European regulars. This campaign against the Cherokees was infinitely more successful than that waged in 1760 against the same foe by armies of grenadiers and highlanders.

[2] That is, after the return of the South Carolinians from their destruction of the lower towns.

[3] "Historical Sketches of North Carolina," John H. Wheeler, Philadelphia, 1851, p. 383.

[4] "American Archives," 5th Series, vol. II, p. 1235.

colored cotton; the cloth was made from hemp, tow, and wild-nettle bark.

He passed over the Blue Ridge at Swannanoa Gap, crossed the French Broad at the Warrior's Ford, and then went through the mountains[1] to the middle towns, a detachment of a thousand men making a forced march in advance. This detachment was fired at by a small band of Indians from an ambush, and one man was wounded in the foot; but no further resistance was made, the towns being abandoned.[2] The main body coming up, parties of troops were sent out in every direction, and all of the middle towns were destroyed. Rutherford had expected to meet Williamson at this place, but the latter did not appear, and so the North Carolina commander determined to proceed alone against the valley towns along the Hiawassee. Taking with him only nine hundred picked men, he attempted to cross the rugged mountain chains which separated him from his destination; but he had no guide, and missed the regular pass—a fortunate thing for him, as it afterward turned out, for he thus escaped falling into an ambush of five hundred Cherokees who were encamped along it.[3] After in vain trying to penetrate the tangle of gloomy defiles and wooded peaks, he returned to the middle towns at Canucca on September 18th. Here he met Williamson, who had just arrived, having been delayed so that he could not leave Fort Rutledge until the 13th.[4] The South Carolinians, two thousand strong, had crossed the Blue Ridge near the sources of the Little Tennessee.

[1] Up Hominy Creek, across the Pigeon, up Richland Creek, across Tuckaseigee River, over Cowee Mount.

[2] "American Archives," 5th Series, II, p. 1235.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Drayton. There was a good deal of jealousy between the two armies, and their reports conflict on some points.

While Rutherford rested,[1] Williamson, on the 19th, pushed on through Noewee pass, and fell into the ambush which had been laid for the former. The pass was a narrow, open valley, walled in by steep and lofty mountains. The Indians waited until the troops were struggling up to the outlet, and then assailed them with a close and deadly fire. The surprised soldiers recoiled and fell into confusion; and they were for the second time saved from disaster by the gallantry of Colonel Hammond, who with voice and action rallied them, endeavoring to keep them firm while a detachment was sent to clamber up the rocks and outflank the Indians. At the same time Lieutenant Hampton got twenty men together, out of the rout, and ran forward, calling out: "Loaded guns advance, empty guns fall down and load." Being joined by some thirty men more he pushed desperately upward. The Indians fled from the shock; and the army thus owed its safety solely to two gallant officers. Of the whites seventeen were killed and twenty-nine wounded;[2] they took fourteen scalps.[3]

Although the distance was but twenty-odd miles, it took Williamson five days of incredible toil before he reached the valley towns. The troops showed the utmost patience, clearing a path for the pack-train along the sheer mountainsides and through the dense, untrodden forests in the valleys. The trail often wound along cliffs where a single misstep of a pack-animal re-

[1] There is some conflict in the accounts of the destruction of the valley towns; after carefully comparing the accounts in the "American Archives," Drayton, White, Ramsey, etc., I believe that the above is substantially accurate. However, it is impossible to reconcile all of the accounts of the relative order of Rutherford's and Williamson's marches.

[2] Drayton. The "American Archives" say only twelve killed and twenty wounded. In another skirmish at Cheowee three South Carolinians were killed.

[3] "American Archives," 5th Series, II, p. 1235.

sulted in its being dashed to pieces. But the work, though fatiguing, was healthy; it was noticed that during the whole expedition not a man was laid up for any length of time by sickness.

Rutherford joined Williamson immediately afterward, and together they utterly laid waste the valley towns; and then, in the last week of September, started homeward. All the Cherokee settlements west of the Appalachians had been destroyed from the face of the earth, neither crops nor cattle being left, and most of the inhabitants were obliged to take refuge with the Creeks.

Rutherford reached home in safety, never having experienced any real resistance; he had lost but three men in all. He had killed twelve Indians, and had captured nine more, besides seven whites and four negroes. He had also taken piles of deerskins, a hundredweight of gunpowder, and twenty-five hundred pounds of lead; and, moreover, had wasted and destroyed to his heart's content.[1]

Williamson, too, reached home without suffering further damage, entering Fort Rutledge on October 7th. In his two expeditions he had had ninety-four men killed and wounded, but he had done much more harm than any one else to the Indians. It was said the South Carolinians had taken seventy-five scalps;[2] at any rate, the South Carolina legislature had offered a reward of seventy-five pounds for every warrior's scalp, as well as one hundred pounds for every Indian and eighty pounds for every Tory or negro taken prisoner.[3] But the troops were forbidden to sell their prisoners as

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 990. Drayton puts the total Cherokee loss at two hundred.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 33.

slaves—not a needless injunction, as is shown by the fact that when it was issued there had already been at least one case in Williamson's own army where a captured Indian was sold into bondage.

The Virginia troops had meanwhile been slowly gathering at the Great Island of the Holston, under Colonel William Christian, preparatory to assaulting the Overhill Cherokees. While they were assembling, the Indians threatened them from time to time; once a small party of braves crossed the river and killed a soldier near the main post of the army, and also killed a settler; a day or two later another war-party slipped by toward the settlements, but on being pursued by a detachment of militia faced about and returned to their town.[1] On the 1st of October the army started, two thousand strong,[2] including some troops from North Carolina, and all the gunmen who could be spared from the little stockaded hamlets scattered along the Watauga, the Holston, and the Clinch. Except a small force of horse-riflemen, the men were on foot, each with tomahawk, scalping-knife, and long, grooved flint-lock; all were healthy, well equipped, and in fine spirits, driving their pack-horses and bullocks with them. Characteristically enough, a Presbyterian clergyman, following his backwoods flock, went along with this expedition as chaplain. The army moved very cautiously, the night encampments being made behind breastworks of felled timbers. There was therefore no chance for a surprise; and their great inferiority in number made it hopeless for the Cherokees to try a fair fight. In their

[1] These two events took place on September 26th and 29th; "American Archives," 5th Series, vol. II, p. 540. Ramsey is thus wrong in saying no white was killed on this expedition.

[2] McAfee MSS. One of the McAfees went along and preserved a rough diary of dates.

despair they asked help from the Creeks; but the latter replied that they had plucked the thorn of warfare from their (the Creeks') foot, and were welcome to keep it.[1]

The Virginians came steadily on[2] until they reached the Big Island of the French Broad.[3] Here the Cherokees had gathered their warriors, and they sent a Tory trader across with a flag of truce. Christian, well knowing that the Virginians greatly outnumbered the Indians, let the man go through his camp at will,[4] and sent him back with word that the Cherokee towns were doomed, for that he would surely march to them and destroy them. That night he left half of his men in camp, lying on their arms by the watch-fires, while with the others he forded the river below and came round to surprise the Indian encampment from behind; but he found that the Indians had fled, for their hearts had become as water, nor did they venture at any time, during this expedition, to molest the white forces. Following them up, Christian reached the towns early in November,[5] and remained two weeks, sending out parties to burn the cabins and destroy the stores of corn and potatoes. The Indians[6] sent in a flag to treat for peace, surrendering the horses and prisoners they had taken, and agreeing to fix a boundary and give up to the settlers the land they already had, as well as some additional territory. Christian made peace on these terms and ceased his ravages, but he excepted the town of Tuskega, whose people had burned alive the boy

[1] "History of Virginia," John Burke (continued by L. H. Girardin), Petersburg, 1816, p. 176.

[2] After camping a few days at Double Springs, the headwaters of Lick Creek, to let all the Watauga men come up.

[3] They sent spies in advance. The trail led through forests and marshy canebrakes; across Nolichucky, up Long Creek and down Dunplin Creek to the French Broad. — Haywood and Ramsey.

[4] McAfee MSS. [5] November 5th. — *Ibid.* [6] November 8th. — *Ibid.*

taken captive at Watauga. This town he reduced to ashes.

Nor would the chief Dragging Canoe accept peace at all; but gathering round him the fiercest and most unruly of the young men, he left the rest of the tribe and retired to the Chickamauga fastnesses.

When the preliminary truce had been made, Christian marched his forces homeward, and disbanded them a fortnight before Christmas, leaving a garrison at Holston, Great Island. During the ensuing spring and summer peace treaties were definitely concluded between the Upper Cherokees and Virginia and North Carolina at the Great Island of the Holston,[1] and between the Lower Cherokees and South Carolina and Georgia at De Witt's Corners. The Cherokees gave up some of their lands; of the four seacoast provinces South Carolina gained most, as was proper, for she had done and suffered most.[2]

The Watauga people and the Westerners generally were the real gainers by the war. Had the Watauga settlements been destroyed, they would no longer have covered the Wilderness Road to Kentucky; and so Kentucky must perforce have been abandoned. But the followers of Robertson and Sevier stood stoutly for their homes; not one of them fled over the mountains. The Cherokees had been so roughly handled that for several years they did not again go to war as a body; and this not only gave the settlers a breathing time, but also enabled them to make themselves so strong

[1] The boundary then established between the Cherokees and Watauga people was known as Brown's Line.

[2] As a very rough guess, after a careful examination of all the authorities, it may be said that in this war somewhat less than two hundred Indians were slain, all warriors. The loss of the whites in war was probably no greater; but it included about as many more women and children. So that, perhaps, two or three times as many whites as Indians were killed, counting in every one.

that when the struggle was renewed they could easily hold their own. The war was thus another and important link in the chain of events by which the West was won; and had any link in the chain snapped during these early years, the peace of 1783 would probably have seen the trans-Alleghany country in the hands of a non-American power.

CHAPTER XII

GROWTH AND CIVIL ORGANIZATION OF KENTUCKY

1776

By the end of 1775 Kentucky had been occupied by those who were permanently to hold it. Stout-hearted men, able to keep what they had grasped, moved in, and took with them their wives and children. There was also, of course, a large shifting element, composing, indeed, the bulk of the population: hunters who came out for the season; "cabinners," or men who merely came out to build a cabin and partially clear a spot of ground, so as to gain a right to it under the law; surveyors, and those adventurers always to be found in a new country, who are too restless, or too timid, or too irresolute to remain.

The men with families and the young men who intended to make permanent homes formed the heart of the community, the only part worth taking into account. There was a steady though thin stream of such immigrants, and they rapidly built up around them a life not very unlike that which they had left behind with their old homes. Even in 1776 there was marrying and giving in marriage, and children were born in Kentucky. The newcomers had to settle in forts, where the young men and maidens had many chances for courtship. They married early, and were as fruitful as they were hardy.[1] Most of these marriages were

[1] Imlay, p. 55, estimated that from natural increase the population of Kentucky doubled every fifteen years—probably an exaggeration.

civil contracts, but some may have been solemnized by clergymen, for the commonwealth received from the outset occasional visits from ministers.

These ministers belonged to different denominations, but all were sure of a hearing. The backwoodsmen were forced by their surroundings to exercise a grudging charity toward the various forms of religious belief entertained among themselves—though they hated and despised French and Spanish Catholics. When off in the wilderness they were obliged to take a man for what he did, not for what he thought. Of course there were instances to the contrary, and there is an amusing and authentic story of two hunters, living alone and far from any settlement, who quarrelled because one was a Catholic and the other a Protestant. The seceder took up his abode in a hollow tree within speaking distance of his companion's cabin. Every day on arising they bade each other good morning; but not another word passed between them for the many months during which they saw no other white face.[1] There was a single serious and important, albeit only partial, exception to this general rule of charity. After the outbreak of the Revolution, the Kentuckians, in common with other backwoodsmen, grew to thoroughly dislike one religious body which they already distrusted; this was the Church of England, the Episcopal Church. They long regarded it as merely the persecuting ecclesiastical arm of the British Government. Such of them as had been brought up in any faith at all had for the most part originally professed some form of Calvinism; they had very probably learnt their letters from a primer which, in one of its rude cuts, represented John Rogers at the stake, surrounded by his wife and seven children,

[1] Hale's "Trans-Alleghany Pioneers," p. 251.

and in their after-lives they were more familiar with the "Pilgrim's Progress" than with any other book, save the Bible; so that it was natural for them to distrust the successors of those who had persecuted Rogers and Bunyan.[1] Still, the border communities were, as times then went, very tolerant in religious matters; and of course most of the men had no chance to display, or indeed to feel, sectarianism of any kind, for they had no issue to join, and rarely a church about which to rally.

By the time Kentucky was settled the Baptists had begun to make headway on the frontier, at the expense of the Presbyterians. The rough democracy of the border welcomed a sect which was itself essentially democratic. To many of the backwoodsmen's prejudices, notably their sullen and narrow hostility toward all ranks, whether or not based on merit and learning, the Baptists' creed appealed strongly. Where their preachers obtained foothold, it was made a matter of reproach to the Presbyterian clergymen that they had been educated in early life for the ministry as for a profession. The love of liberty, and the defiant assertion of equality, so universal in the backwoods, and so excellent in themselves, sometimes took very warped and twisted forms, notably when they betrayed the backwoodsmen into the belief that the true democratic spirit forbade any exclusive and special training for the professions that produce soldiers, statesmen, or ministers.

The fact that the Baptist preachers were men exactly similar to their fellows in all their habits of life not only gave them a good standing at once, but like-

[1] "Pioneer Life in Kentucky," Daniel Drake, Cincinnati, 1870, p. 196 (an invaluable work).

wise enabled them very early to visit the farthest settlements, travelling precisely like other backwoodsmen; and once there, each preacher, each earnest professor, doing bold and fearless missionary work, became the nucleus round which a little knot of true believers gathered. Two or three of them made short visits to Kentucky during the first few years of its existence. One, who went thither in the early spring of 1776, kept a journal[1] of his trip. He travelled over the Wilderness Road with eight other men. Three of them were Baptists like himself, who prayed every night; and their companions, though they did not take part in the praying, did not interrupt it. Their journey through the melancholy and silent wilderness resembled in its incidents the countless other similar journeys that were made at that time and later. They suffered from cold and hunger and lack of shelter; they became footsore and weary, and worn out with driving the pack-horses. On the top of the lonely Cumberland Mountains they came upon the wolf-eaten remains of a previous traveller, who had recently been killed by Indians. At another place they met four men returning—cowards, whose hearts had failed them when in sight of the promised land. While on the great Indian war trail they killed a buffalo, and thenceforth lived on its jerked meat. One night the wolves smelt the flesh, and came up to the camp-fire; the strong hunting-dogs rushed out with clamorous barking to drive them away, and the sudden alarm for a moment made the sleepy wayfarers think that roving Indians had attacked them. When they reached Crab Orchard their dangers were for the moment past; all travellers grew to regard with affec-

[1] MS. Autobiography of Rev. William Hickman. He was born in Virginia, February 4, 1747. A copy in Colonel Durrett's library at Louisville, Ky.

tion the station by this little grove of wild apple-trees. It is worthy of note that the early settlers loved to build their homes near these natural orchards, moved by the fragrance and beauty of the bloom in spring.[1]

The tired Baptist was not overpleased with Harrodstown, though he there listened to the preaching of one of his own sect.[2] He remarked "a poor town it was in those days," a couple of rows of smoky cabins, tenanted by dirty women and ragged children, while the tall, unkempt frontiersmen lounged about in greasy hunting-shirts, breech-clouts, leggings, and moccasins. There was little or no corn until the crops were gathered, and, like the rest, he had to learn to eat wild meat without salt. The settlers—as is always the case in frontier towns where the people are wrapped up in their own pursuits and rivalries, and are obliged to talk of one another for lack of outside interests—were divided by bickering, gossiping jealousies; and at this time they were quarrelling as to whether the Virginian cabin-rights or Henderson's land-grants would prove valid. As usual, the zealous Baptist preacher found that the women were the first to "get religion," as he phrased it. Sometimes their husbands likewise came in with them; at other times they remained indifferent. Often they savagely resented their wives and daughters being converted, visiting on the head of the preacher an anger that did not always find vent in mere words; for the backwoodsmen had strong, simple natures, powerfully excited for good or evil, and those who were not God-fearing usually became active and furious opponents of all religion.

[1] There were at least three such "Crab-Orchard" stations in Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The settlers used the word "crab" precisely as Shakespeare does.

[2] A Mr. Finley.—Hickman MS.

It is curious to compare the description of life in a frontier fort as given by this undoubtedly prejudiced observer with the equally prejudiced, but golden, instead of sombre, hued, reminiscences of frontier life, over which the pioneers lovingly lingered in their old age. To these old men the long-vanished stockades seemed to have held a band of brothers, who were ever generous, hospitable, courteous, and fearless, always ready to help one another, never envious, never flinching from any foe.[1] Neither account is accurate; but the last is quite as near the truth as the first. On the border, as elsewhere, but with the different qualities in even bolder contrast, there was much both of good and bad, of shiftless viciousness and resolute honesty. Many of the hunters were mere restless wanderers, who soon surrendered their clearings to small farming squatters but a degree less shiftless than themselves; the latter brought the ground a little more under cultivation, and then likewise left it and wandered onward, giving place to the third set of frontiersmen, the steady men who had come to stay. But often the first hunters themselves stayed and grew up as farmers and landed proprietors.[2] Many of the earliest pioneers, including most of their leaders, founded families, which took root in the land and flourish to this day, the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of the old-time Indian fighters becoming Congressmen and judges, and officers in the regular army and in the Federal and Confederate forces during the Civil War.[3] In fact, the very first comers to a wild and dangerous country are apt to be men with fine qualities of heart and head; it is not until

[1] McAfee MSS. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] Such was the case with the Clarks, Boones, Seviers, Shelbys, Robertsons, Logans, Cockes, Crocketts, etc., many of whose descendants it has been my good fortune personally to know.

they have partly tamed the land that the scum of the frontier drifts into it.[1]

In 1776, as in after-years, there were three routes that were taken by immigrants to Kentucky. One led by backwoods trails to the Greenbriar settlements, and thence down the Kanawha to the Ohio;[2] but the travel over this was insignificant compared to that along the others. The two really important routes were the Wilderness Road, and that by water, from Fort Pitt down the Ohio River. Those who chose the latter way embarked in roughly built little flatboats at Fort Pitt, if they came from Pennsylvania, or else at the old Redstone fort on the Monongahela, if from Maryland or Virginia, and drifted down with the current. Though this was the easiest method, yet the danger from Indians was so very great that most immigrants, the Pennsylvanians as well as the Marylanders, Virginians, and North Carolinians,[3] usually went overland by the Wilderness Road. This was the trace marked out by Boone, which to the present day remains a monument to his skill as a practical surveyor and engineer. Those going along it went on foot, driving their horses and

[1] This is as true to-day in the far West as it was formerly in Kentucky and Tennessee; at least, to judge by my own experience in the Little Missouri region, and in portions of the Kootenai, Cœur d'Alêne, and Bighorn countries.

[2] McAfee MSS. See also "Trans-Alleghany Pioneers," p. 111. As Mr. Hale points out, this route, which was travelled by Floyd, Bullitt, the McAfees, and many others, has not received due attention, even in Colonel Speed's invaluable and interesting "Wilderness Road."

[3] Up to 1783 the Kentucky immigrants came from the backwoods of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, and were of almost precisely the same character as those that went to Tennessee.—See Imlay, p. 168. At the close of the Revolutionary War, Tennessee and Kentucky were almost alike in population. But after that time the population of Kentucky rapidly grew varied, and the great immigration of upper-class Virginians gave it a peculiar stamp of its own. By 1796, when Logan was defeated for governor, the control of Kentucky had passed out of the hands of the pioneers; whereas in Tennessee the old Indian fighters continued to give the tone to the social life of the State and remained in control until they died.

cattle. At the last important frontier town they fitted themselves out with pack-saddles; for in such places two of the leading industries were always those of the pack-saddle maker and the artisan in deer leather. When there was need, the pioneer could of course make a rough pack-saddle for himself, working it up from two forked branches of a tree. If several families were together, they moved slowly in true patriarchal style. The elder boys drove the cattle, which usually headed the caravan; while the younger children were packed in crates of hickory withes and slung across the backs of the old quiet horses, or else were seated safely between the great rolls of bedding that were carried in similar fashion. The women sometimes rode and sometimes walked, carrying the babies. The men, rifle on shoulder, drove the pack-train, while some of them walked spread out in front, flank, and rear, to guard against the savages.[1] A tent or brush lean-to gave cover at night. Each morning the men packed the animals while the women cooked breakfast and made ready the children. Special care had to be taken not to let the loaded animals brush against the yellow-jacket nests, which were always plentiful along the trail in the fall of the year; for in such a case the vicious swarms attacked man and beast, producing an immediate stampede, to the great detriment of the packs.[2] In winter the fords and mountains often became impassable, and trains

[1] McAfee MSS. Just as the McAfee family started for Kentucky, the wife of one of their number, George, was confined. The others had to leave her; but at the first long halt the husband hurried back, only to meet his wife on the way; for she had ridden after them just three days after her confinement, taking her baby along.

[2] "Pioneer Biography," James McBride (son of a pioneer who was killed by the Indians in 1789 in Kentucky), p. 183, Cincinnati, 1869. One of the excellent series published by Robert Clarke & Co., to whom American historians owe a special and unique debt of gratitude.

were kept in one place for weeks at a time, escaping starvation only by killing the lean cattle; for few deer at that season remained in the mountains.

Both the water route and the Wilderness Road were infested by the savages at all times, and whenever there was open war the sparsely settled regions from which they started were likewise harried. When the northwestern tribes threatened Fort Pitt and Fort Henry —or Pittsburg and Wheeling, as they were getting to be called—they threatened one of the two localities which served to cover the communications with Kentucky; but it was far more serious when the Holston region was menaced, because the land travel was at first much the more important.

The early settlers, of course, had to suffer great hardship even when they reached Kentucky. The only two implements the men invariably carried were the axe and rifle, for they were almost equally proud of their skill as warriors, hunters, and wood-choppers. Next in importance came the sickle or scythe. The first three tasks of the pioneer farmer were to build a cabin, to make a clearing—burning the brush, cutting down the small trees, and girdling the large—and to plant corn. Until the crop ripened he hunted steadily, and his family lived on the abundant game, save for which it would have been wholly impossible to have settled Kentucky so early. If it was winter-time, however, all the wild meat was very lean and poor eating, unless by chance a bear was found in a hollow tree, when there was a royal feast, the breast of the wild turkey serving as a substitute for bread.[1] If the men were suddenly called away by an Indian inroad, their families sometimes had to live for days on boiled tops of green nettles.[2] Natu-

[1] McAfee MSS.

[2] McBride, II, 197.

rally, the children watched the growth of the tasselled corn with hungry eagerness until the milky ears were fit for roasting. When they hardened, the grains were pounded into hominy in the hominy-block, or else ground into meal in the rough hand-mill, made of two limestones in a hollow sycamore log. Until flax could be grown the women were obliged to be content with lint made from the bark of dead nettles. This was gathered in the springtime by all the people of a station acting together, a portion of the men standing guard while the rest, with the women and children, plucked the dead stalks. The smart girls of Irish ancestry spun many dozen cuts of linen from this lint, which was as fine as flax but not so strong.[1]

Neither hardship nor danger could render the young people downhearted, especially when several families, each containing grown-up sons and daughters, were living together in almost every fort. The chief amusements were hunting and dancing. There being no permanent ministers, even the gloomy Calvinism of some of the pioneers was relaxed. Long afterward one of them wrote, in a spirit of quaint apology, that "dancing was not then considered criminal," [2] and that it kept up the spirits of the young people, and made them more healthy and happy; and, recalling somewhat uneasily the merriment in the stations, in spite of the terrible and interminable Indian warfare, the old moralist felt obliged to condemn it, remarking that, owing to the lack of ministers of the gospel, the impressions made by misfortune were not improved.

Though obliged to be very careful and to keep their families in forts, and in spite of a number of them being killed by the savages,[3] the settlers in 1776 were able to

[1] McAfee MSS. [2] *Ibid.* [3] Morehead, Appendix. Floyd's letter.

wander about and explore the country thoroughly,[1] making little clearings as the basis of "cabin claims," and now and then gathering into stations which were for the most part broken up by the Indians and abandoned.[2] What was much more important, the permanent settlers in the well-established stations proceeded to organize a civil government.

They by this time felt little but contempt for the Henderson or Transylvania government. Having sent a petition against it to the provincial authorities, they were confident that what faint shadow of power it still retained would soon vanish; so they turned their attention to securing a representation in the Virginia Convention. All Kentucky was still considered as a part of Fincastle County, and the inhabitants were therefore unrepresented at the capital. They determined to remedy this; and, after due proclamation, gathered together at Harrodstown early in June, 1776. During five days an election was held, and two delegates were chosen to go to Williamsburg, then the seat of government.

This was done at the suggestion of Clark, who, having spent the winter in Virginia, had returned to Kentucky in the spring. He came out alone and on foot, and by his sudden appearance surprised the settlers not a little. The first to meet him was a young lad,[3] who had gone a few miles out of Harrodstown to turn some

[1] They retained few Indian names; Kentucky in this respect differing from most other sections of the Union. The names were either taken from the explorers, as Floyd's Fork; or from some natural peculiarity, as the Licking, so called from the number of game-licks along its borders; or else they commemorated some incident. On Dreaming Creek Boone fell asleep and dreamed he was stung by yellow-jackets. The Elkhorn was so named because a hunter, having slain a monstrous bull elk, stuck up its horns on a pole at the mouth. At Bloody Run several men were slain. Eagle Branch was so called because of the many bald eagles round it. See McAfee MSS.

[2] Marshall, 45.

[3] Afterward General William Ray.—Butler, p. 37.

horses on the range. The boy had killed a teal-duck that was feeding in a spring, and was roasting it nicely at a small fire when he was startled by the approach of a fine soldierly man, who hailed him: "How do you do, my little fellow? What is your name? Ar'n't you afraid of being in the woods by yourself?" The stranger was evidently hungry, for on being invited to eat he speedily finished the entire duck; and when the boy asked his name he answered that it was Clark, and that he had come out to see what the brave fellows in Kentucky were doing, and to help them if there was need. He took up his temporary abode at Harrodstown—visiting all the forts, however, and being much in the woods by himself—and his commanding mind and daring, adventurous temper speedily made him, what for ten critical years he remained, the leader among all the bold "hunters of Kentucky"—as the early settlers loved to call themselves.

He had advised against delegates to the convention being chosen, thinking that instead the Kentuckians should send accredited agents to treat with the Virginian government. If their terms were not agreed to, he declared that they ought to establish forthwith an independent State; an interesting example of how early the separatist spirit showed itself in Kentucky. But the rest of the people were unwilling to go quite as far. They elected two delegates, Clark of course being one. With them they sent a petition for admission as a separate county. They were primarily farmers, hunters, Indian fighters—not scholars; and their petition was couched in English that was at times a little crooked; but the idea at any rate was perfectly straight, and could not be misunderstood. They announced that if they were admitted they would cheerfully co-operate in

every measure to secure the public peace and safety, and at the same time pointed out with marked emphasis "how impolitical it would be to suffer such a Respectable Body of Prime Riflemen to remain in a state of neutrality" during the then existing Revolutionary struggle.[1]

Armed with this document and their credentials, Clark and his companion set off across the desolate and Indian-haunted mountains. They travelled very fast, the season was extremely wet, and they did not dare to kindle fires for fear of the Indians; in consequence, they suffered torments from cold, hunger, and especially from "scalded" feet. Yet they hurried on, and presented their petition to the governor[2] and council—the legislature having adjourned. Clark also asked for five hundredweight of gunpowder, of which the Kentucky settlement stood in sore and pressing need. This the council at first refused to give; whereupon Clark informed them that if the country was not worth defending, it was not worth claiming, making it plain that if the request was not granted, and if Kentucky was forced to assume the burdens of independence, she would likewise assume its privileges. After this plain statement, the council yielded. Clark took the powder down the Ohio River, and got it safely through to Kentucky; though a party sent under John Todd to convey it overland from the Limestone Creek was met at the Licking and defeated by the Indians, Clark's fellow delegate being among the killed.

Before returning, Clark had attended the fall meeting of the Virginia legislature, and in spite of the oppo-

[1] Petition of the committee of West Fincastle, dated June 20, 1776. It is printed in Colonel John Mason Brown's "Battle of the Blue Licks" pamphlet.

[2] Patrick Henry.

sition of Henderson, who was likewise present, he procured the admission of Kentucky as a separate county, with boundaries corresponding to those of the present State. Early in the ensuing year, 1777, the county was accordingly organized; Harrodstown, or Harrodsburg, as it was now beginning to be called, was made the county-seat, having by this time supplanted Boonesborough in importance. The court was composed of the six or eight men whom the governor of Virginia had commissioned as justices of the peace; they were empowered to meet monthly to transact necessary business, and had a sheriff and clerk.[1] These took care of the internal concerns of the settlers. To provide for their defense a county lieutenant was created, with the rank of colonel,[2] who forthwith organized a militia regiment, placing all the citizens, whether permanent residents or not, into companies and battalions. Finally, two burgesses were chosen to represent the county in the General Assembly of Virginia.[3] In later years Daniel Boone himself served as a Kentucky burgess in the Virginia legislature;[4] a very different body from the little Transylvania parliament in which he began his career as a lawmaker. The old backwoods hero led a strange life: varying his long wanderings and explorations, his endless campaigns against savage men and savage beasts, by serving as road-maker, town-builder, and commonwealth-founder, sometimes organizing the

[1] Among their number were John Todd (likewise chosen burgess—in these early days a man of mark often filled several distinct positions at the same time), Benjamin Logan, Richard Calloway, John Bowman, and John Floyd; the latter was an educated Virginian who was slain by the Indians before his fine natural qualities had time to give him the place he would otherwise assuredly have reached.

[2] The first colonel was John Bowman.

[3] John Todd and Richard Calloway. See "Diary of George Rogers Clark," in 1776. Given by Morehead, p. 161.

[4] Butler, 166.

frontiersmen for foreign war and again doing his share in devising the laws under which they were to live and prosper.

But the pioneers were speedily drawn into a life-and-death struggle which engrossed their whole attention to the exclusion of all merely civil matters; a struggle in which their land became in truth what the Indians called it—a dark and bloody ground, a land with blood-stained rivers.[1]

It was impossible long to keep peace on the border between the ever-encroaching whites and their fickle and bloodthirsty foes. The hard, reckless, often brutalized frontiersmen, greedy of land and embittered by the memories of untold injuries, regarded all Indians with sullen enmity, and could not be persuaded to distinguish between the good and the bad.[2] The central government was as powerless to restrain as to protect these far-off and unruly citizens. On the other hand, the Indians were as treacherous as they were ferocious—Delawares, Shawnees, Wyandots, and all.[3] While deceiving the commandants of the posts by peaceful protestations, they would steadily continue their ravages and murders; and while it was easy to persuade a number of the chiefs and warriors of a tribe to enter into a treaty, it was impossible to make the remainder respect it.[4] The chiefs

[1] The Iroquois, as well as the Cherokees, used these expressions concerning portions of the Ohio valley.—Heckewelder, 118.

[2] State Department MSS., No. 147, vol. VI, March 15, 1781.

[3] As one instance among many, see Haldimand MSS., letter of Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, August 17, 1778, where Girty reported, on behalf of the Delawares, the tribe least treacherous to the Americans, that even these Indians were only going in to Fort Pitt and keeping up friendly relations with its garrison so as to deceive the whites, and that as soon as their corn was ripe they would move off to the hostile tribes.

[4] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. I, p. 107. Letter of Captain John Doughty.

might be for peace, but the young braves were always for war, and could not be kept back.[1]

In July, 1776, the Delawares, Shawnees, and Mingo chiefs assembled at Fort Pitt and declared for neutrality;[2] the Iroquois ambassadors, who were likewise present, haughtily announced that their tribes would permit neither the British nor the Americans to march an army through their territory. They disclaimed any responsibility for what might be done by a few wayward young men; and requested the Delawares and Shawnees to do as they had promised, and to distribute the Iroquois "talk" among their people. After the Indian fashion, they emphasized each point which they wished kept in mind by the presentation of a string of wampum.[3]

Yet at this very time a party of Mingos tried to kill the American Indian agents, and were only prevented by Cornstalk, whose noble and faithful conduct was so soon to be rewarded by his own brutal murder. Moreover, while the Shawnee chief was doing this, some of his warriors journeyed down to the Cherokees and gave them the war-belt, assuring them that the Wyandots and Mingos would support them, and that they themselves had been promised ammunition by the French traders of Detroit and the Illinois.[4] On their return home this party of Shawnees scalped two men in Kentucky near the Big Bone Lick, and captured a woman; but they were pursued by the Kentucky settlers, two were killed, and the woman retaken.[5]

Throughout the year the outlook continued to grow more and more threatening. Parties of young men kept

[1] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. I, p. 115. Examination of John Leith.
[2] "American Archives," 5th Series, vol. I, p. 36.
[3] "The Olden Time," Neville B. Craig, II, p. 115.
[4] "American Archives," 5th Series, vol. I, p. 111.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 137.

making inroads on the settlements, especially in Kentucky; not only did the Shawnees, Wyandots, Mingos, and Iroquois[1] act thus, but they were even joined by bands of Ottawas, Pottawatomies, and Chippewas from the lakes, who thus attacked the white settlers long ere the latter had either the will or the chance to hurt them.

Until the spring of 1777[2] the outbreak was not general, and it was supposed that only some three or four hundred warriors had taken up the tomahawk.[3] Yet the outlying settlers were all the time obliged to keep as sharp a lookout as if engaged in open war. Throughout the summer of 1776 the Kentucky settlers were continually harassed. Small parties of Indians were constantly lurking round the forts, to shoot down the men as they hunted or worked in the fields, and to carry off the women. There was a constant and monotonous succession of unimportant forays and skirmishes.

One band of painted marauders carried off Boone's daughter. She was in a canoe with two other girls on the river near Boonesborough when they were pounced on by five Indians.[4] As soon as he heard the news Boone

[1] *Ibid.*, vol. II, pp. 516, 1236.

[2] When Cornstalk was so foully murdered by the whites; although the outbreak was then already started.

[3] Madison MSS. But both the American statesmen and the Continental officers were so deceived by the treacherous misrepresentations of the Indians that they often greatly underestimated the numbers of the Indians on the war-path; curiously enough, their figures are frequently much more erroneous than those of the frontiersmen. Thus the Madison MSS. and State Department MSS. contain statements that only a few hundred northwestern warriors were in the field at the very time that two thousand had been fitted out at Detroit to act along the Ohio and Wabash — as we learn from De Peyster's letter to Haldimand of May 17, 1780 (in the Haldimand MSS.).

[4] On July 14, 1776. The names of the three girls were Betsy and Fanny Callaway and Jemima Boone. See Boone's "Narrative"; and Butler, who gives the letter of July 21, 1776, written by Colonel John Floyd, one of the pursuing party.

The names of the lovers, in their order, were Samuel Henderson (a brother of Richard), John Holder, and Flanders Callaway. Three weeks after the return to the fort, Squire Boone united in marriage the eldest pair of lovers, Samuel Hender-

went in pursuit with a party of seven men from the fort, including the three lovers of the captured girls. After following the trail all of one day and the greater part of two nights, the pursuers came up with the savages, and, rushing in, scattered or slew them before they could either make resistance or kill their captives. The rescuing party then returned in triumph to the fort.

Thus for two years the pioneers worked in the wilderness, harassed by unending individual warfare, but not threatened by any formidable attempt to oust them from the lands that they had won. During this breathing spell they established civil government, explored the country, planted crops, and built strongholds. Then came the inevitable struggle. When in 1777 the snows began to melt before the lengthening spring days, the riflemen who guarded the log forts were called on to make head against a series of resolute efforts to drive them from Kentucky.

son and Betsy Callaway. It was the first wedding that ever took place in Kentucky. Both the other couples were likewise married a year or two later.

The whole story reads like a page out of one of Cooper's novels. The two younger girls gave way to despair when captured; but Betsy Callaway was sure they would be followed and rescued. To mark the line of their flight she broke off twigs from the bushes, and when threatened with the tomahawk for doing this, she tore off strips from her dress. The Indians carefully covered their trail, compelling the girls to walk apart, as their captors did, in the thick cane, and to wade up and down the little brooks.

Boone started in pursuit the same evening. All next day he followed the tangled trail like a bloodhound, and early the following morning came on the Indians, camped by a buffalo calf which they had just killed and were about to cook. The rescue was managed very adroitly; for had any warning been given the Indians would have instantly killed their captives, according to their invariable custom. Boone and Floyd each shot one of the savages, and the remaining three escaped almost naked, without gun, tomahawk, or scalping-knife. The girls were unharmed; for the Indians rarely molested their captives on the journey to the home towns, unless their strength gave out, when they were tomahawked without mercy.

CHAPTER XIII

THE WAR IN THE NORTHWEST

1777–1778

In the fall of 1776 it became evident that a formidable Indian war was impending. At Detroit great councils were held by all the northwestern tribes, to whom the Six Nations sent the white belt of peace, that they might cease their feuds and join against the Americans. The later councils were summoned by Henry Hamilton, the British lieutenant-governor of the northwestern region, whose headquarters were at Detroit. He was an ambitious, energetic, unscrupulous man, of bold character, who wielded great influence over the Indians; and the conduct of the war in the West, as well as the entire management of frontier affairs, was intrusted to him by the British Government.[1] He had been ordered to enlist the Indians on the British side, and have them ready to act against the Americans in the spring;[2] and, accordingly, he gathered the tribes together. He himself took part in the war-talks, plying the Indians with presents and fire-water no less than with speeches and promises. The head men of the different tribes, as they grew excited, passed one another black, red, or bloody, and tomahawk belts, as tokens of the vengeance to be taken on their white foes. One Delaware chief still held out for neutrality, announcing that if he had to side with either set of combatants it would be with the "buckskins," or backwoodsmen, and not with the red-

[1] Haldimand MSS. Sir Guy Carleton to Hamilton, September 26, 1777.
[2] *Ibid.*, Carleton to Hamilton, October 6, 1776.

coats; but the bulk of the warriors sympathized with the Half King of the Wyandots when he said that the Long Knives had for years interfered with the Indians' hunting, and that now at last it was the Indians' turn to threaten revenge.[1]

Hamilton was for the next two years the mainspring of Indian hostility to the Americans in the Northwest. From the beginning he had been anxious to employ the savages against the settlers, and when the home government bade him hire them he soon proved himself very expert, as well as very ruthless, in their use.[2] He rapidly acquired the venomous hatred of the backwoodsmen, who held him in peculiar abhorrence, and nicknamed him the "hair-buyer" general, asserting that he put a price on the scalps of the Americans. This allegation may have been untrue, as affecting Hamilton personally; he always endeavored to get the war-parties to bring in prisoners, and behaved well to the captives when they were in his power; nor is there any direct evidence that he himself paid out money for scalps. But scalps were certainly bought and paid for at Detroit;[3] and the commandant himself was accustomed to receive them with formal solemnity at the councils held to greet the war-parties when they returned from successful raids.[4] The only way to keep the friendship of the Indians was continually to give them presents; these

[1] "American Archives," 1st Series, vol. II, p. 517. There were several councils held at Detroit during this fall, and it is difficult—and not very important—to separate the incidents that occurred at each. Some took place before Hamilton arrived, which, according to his "brief account," was November 9th. He asserts that he did not send out war-parties until the following June; but the testimony seems conclusive that he was active in instigating hostility from the time of his arrival.

[2] Haldimand MSS. Germaine to Carleton, March 26, 1777.

[3] See the "American Pioneer," I, 292, for a very curious account of an Indian who, by dividing a large scalp into two, got fifty dollars for each half at Detroit.

[4] Haldimand MSS., *passim;* also Heckewelder, etc.

presents were naturally given to the most successful warriors; and the scalps were the only safe proofs of a warrior's success. Doubtless the commandant and the higher British officers generally treated the Americans humanely when they were brought into contact with them; and it is not likely that they knew, or were willing to know, exactly what the savages did in all cases. But they at least connived at the measures of their subordinates. These were hardened, embittered men who paid for the zeal of their Indian allies accordingly as they received tangible proof thereof; in other words, they hired them to murder non-combatants as well as soldiers, and paid for each life, of any sort, that was taken. The fault lay primarily with the British Government, and with those of its advisers who, like Hamilton, advocated the employment of the savages. They thereby became participants in the crimes committed; and it was idle folly for them to prate about having bidden the savages be merciful. The sin consisted in having let them loose on the borders; once they were let loose it was absolutely impossible to control them. Moreover, the British sinned against knowledge; for some of their highest and most trusted officers on the frontier had written those in supreme command, relating the cruelties practised by the Indians upon the defenseless, and urging that they should not be made allies, but rather that their neutrality only should be secured.[1] The average American backwoodsman was quite as brutal and inconsiderate a victor as the average British officer; in fact, he was in all likelihood the less humane of the two; but the Englishman deliberately made the deeds of the savage his own. Making all allowance for the strait in which the

[1] *E. g.*, in Haldimand MSS. Lieutenant-Governor Abbott to General Carleton, June 8, 1778.

British found themselves, and admitting that much can be said against their accusers, the fact remains that they urged on hordes of savages to slaughter men, women, and children along the entire frontier; and for this there must ever rest a dark stain on their national history.

Hamilton organized a troop of white rangers from among the French, British, and Tories at Detroit. They acted as allies of the Indians, and furnished leaders to them. Three of these leaders were the Tories McKee, Elliot, and Girty, who had fled together from Pittsburg;[1] they all three warred against their countrymen with determined ferocity. Girty won the widest fame on the border by his cunning and cruelty; but he was really a less able foe than the two others. McKee in particular showed himself a fairly good commander of Indians and irregular troops; as did likewise an Englishman named Caldwell, and two French partisans, de Quindre and Lamothe, who were hearty supporters of the British.

Hamilton and his subordinates, both red and white, were engaged in what was essentially an effort to exterminate the borderers. They were not endeavoring merely to defeat the armed bodies of the enemy. They were explicitly bidden by those in supreme command

[1] Haldimand MSS. Hamilton's letter, April 25, 1778.

"April the 20th—Edward Hayle (who had undertaken to carry a letter from me to the Moravian Minister at Kushayhking) returned, having executed his commission—he brought me a letter & newspapers from Mr. McKee who was Indian agent for the Crown and has been a long time in the hands of the Rebels at Fort Pitt, at length has found means to make his escape with three other men, two of the name of Girty (mentioned in Lord Dunmore's list) interpreters & Matthew Elliott the young man who was last summer sent down from this place a prisoner.—This last person I am informed has been at New York since he left Quebec, and probably finding the change in affairs unfavorable to the Rebels, has slipp'd away to make his peace here.

"23d—Hayle went off again to conduct them all safe through the Villages having a letter & Wampum for that purpose. Alexander McKee is a man of good character, and has great influence with the Shawanese is well acquainted with the country & can probably give some useful intelligence, he will probably reach this place in a few days."

to push back the frontier, to expel the settlers from the country. Hamilton himself had been ordered by his immediate official superior to assail the borders of Pennsylvania and Virginia with his savages, to destroy the crops and buildings of the settlers who had advanced beyond the mountains, and to give to his Indian allies —the Hurons, Shawnees, and other tribes—all the land of which they thus took possession.[1] With such allies as Hamilton had, this order was tantamount to proclaiming a war of extermination, waged with appalling and horrible cruelty against the settlers, of all ages and sexes. It brings out in bold relief the fact that in the West the war of the Revolution was an effort on the part of Great Britain to stop the westward growth of the English race in America, and to keep the region beyond the Alleghanies as a region where only savages should dwell.

All through the winter of '76–'77 the northwestern Indians were preparing to take up the tomahawk. Runners were sent through the leafless, frozen woods from one to another of their winter camps. In each bleak, frail village, each snow-hidden cluster of bark wigwams, the painted, half-naked warriors danced the war-dance, and sang the war-song, beating the ground with their war-clubs and keeping time with their feet to the rhythmic chant as they moved in rings round the peeled post, into which they struck their hatchets. The hereditary sachems, the peace chiefs, could no longer control the young men. The braves made ready their weapons and battle-gear; their bodies were painted red and black, the plumes of the war-eagle were braided into their long scalp-locks, and some put on necklaces of bears' claws, and head-dresses made of panther skin, or of the shaggy

[1] Haldimand MSS. Haldimand to Hamilton, August 6, 1778.

and horned frontlet of the buffalo.[1] Before the snow was off the ground the war-parties crossed the Ohio and fell on the frontiers from the Monongahela and Kanawha to the Kentucky.[2]

On the Pennsylvanian and Virginian frontiers the panic was tremendous. The people fled into the already existing forts, or hastily built others; where there were but two or three families in a place, they merely gathered into blockhouses—stout log cabins two stories high, with loopholed walls, and the upper story projecting a little over the lower. The savages, well armed with weapons supplied them from the British arsenals on the Great Lakes, spread over the country; and there ensued all the horrors incident to a war waged as relentlessly against the most helpless non-combatants as against the armed soldiers in the field. Blockhouses were surprised and burnt; bodies of militia were ambushed and destroyed. The settlers were shot down as they sat by their hearthstones in the evening, or ploughed the ground during the day; the lurking Indians crept up and killed them while they still-hunted the deer, or while they lay in wait for the elk beside the well-beaten game trails.

The captured women and little ones were driven off to the far interior. The weak among them, the young children, and the women heavy with child, were tomahawked and scalped as soon as their steps faltered. The able-bodied, who could stand the terrible fatigue, and reached their journey's end, suffered various fates. Some were burned at the stake, others were sold to the

[1] For instances of an Indian wearing this buffalo cap, with the horns on, see Kercheval and De Haas.

[2] State Department MSS. for 1777, *passim*. So successful were the Indian chiefs in hoodwinking the officers at Fort Pitt that some of the latter continued to believe that only three or four hundred Indians had gone on the war-path.

French or British traders, and long afterward made their escape, or were ransomed by their relatives. Still others were kept in the Indian camps, the women becoming the slaves or wives of the warriors,[1] while the children were adopted into the tribe, and grew up precisely like their little red-skinned playmates. Sometimes, when they had come to full growth, they rejoined the whites; but generally they were enthralled by the wild freedom and fascination of their forest life, and never forsook their adopted tribesmen, remaining inveterate foes of their own color. Among the ever-recurring tragedies of the frontier, not the least sorrowful was the recovery of these long-missing children by their parents, only to find that they had lost all remembrance of and love for their father and mother, and had become irreclaimable savages, who eagerly grasped the first chance to flee from the intolerable irksomeness and restraint of civilized life.[2]

Among others, the stockade at Wheeling[3] was attacked by two or three hundred Indians; with them came a party of Detroit Rangers, marshalled by drum and fife, and carrying the British colors.[4] Most of the men inside the fort were drawn out by a stratagem, fell

[1] Occasionally we come across records of the women afterward making their escape; very rarely they took their half-breed babies with them. De Haas mentions one such case where the husband, though he received his wife well, always hated the copper-colored addition to his family; the latter, by the way, grew up a thorough Indian, could not be educated, and finally ran away, joined the Revolutionary army, and was never heard of afterward.

[2] For an instance where a boy finally returned, see "Trans-Alleghany Pioneers," p. 119; see also pp. 126, 132, 133, for instances of the capture and treatment of whites by Indians.

[3] Fort Henry. For an account of the siege, see De Haas, pp. 223–340. It took place in the early days of September.

[4] The accounts of the different sieges of Wheeling were first written down from the statements of the pioneers when they had grown very aged. In consequence, there is much uncertainty as to the various incidents. Thus there seems to be a doubt whether Girty did or did not command the Indians in this first siege. The frontiersmen hated Girty as they did no other man, and he was credited with numer-

into an ambuscade, and were slain; but the remainder made good the defense, helped by the women, who ran the lead into bullets, cooled and loaded the guns, and even, when the rush was made, assisted to repel it by firing through the loopholes. After making a determined effort to storm the stockade, in which some of the boldest warriors were slain while trying in vain to batter down the gates with heavy timbers, the baffled Indians were obliged to retire discomfited. The siege was chiefly memorable because of an incident which is to this day a staple theme for story-telling in the cabins of the mountaineers. One of the leading men of the neighborhood was Major Samuel McColloch, renowned along the border as the chief in a family famous for its Indian fighters, the dread and terror of the savages, many of whose most noted warriors he slew, and at whose hands he himself, in the end, met his death. When Wheeling was invested, he tried to break into it, riding a favorite old white horse. But the Indians intercepted him, and hemmed him in on the brink of an almost perpendicular slope,[1] some three hundred feet high. So sheer was the descent that they did not dream any horse could go down it, and instead of shooting they advanced to capture the man whom they hated. McColloch had no thought of surrendering, to die by fire at the stake, and he had as little hope of resistance against so many foes. Wheeling short round, he sat back in the saddle, shifted his rifle into his right hand, reined in his steed, and spurred him over the brink. The old horse

ous actions done by other white leaders of the Indians; the British accounts say comparatively little about him. He seems to have often fought with the Indians as one of their own number, while his associates led organized bands of rangers; he was thus more often brought into contact with the frontiersmen, but was really hardly as dangerous a foe to them as were one or two of his Tory companions.

[1] The hill overlooks Wheeling; the slope has now much crumbled away, and in consequence has lost its steepness.

never faltered, but plunged headlong down the steep, boulder-covered cliff-broken slope. Good luck, aided by the wonderful skill of the rider and the marvellous strength and surefootedness of his steed, rewarded, as it deserved, one of the most daring feats of horsemanship of which we have any authentic record. There was a crash, the shock of a heavy body, half springing, half falling, a scramble among loose rocks, and the snapping of saplings and bushes; and in another moment the awe-struck Indians above saw their unharmed foe, galloping his gallant white horse in safety across the plain. To this day the place is known by the name of McColloch's Leap.[1]

In Virginia and Pennsylvania the Indian outrages meant only the harassing of the borderers; in Kentucky, they threatened the complete destruction of the van-guard of the white advance and, therefore, the stoppage of all settlement west of the Alleghanies until after the Revolutionary War, when very possibly the soil might not have been ours to settle. Fortunately, Hamilton did not yet realize the importance of the Kentucky settlements, nor the necessity of crushing them, and during 1777 the war bands organized at Detroit were sent against the country round Pittsburg; while the feeble forts in the far Western wilderness were only troubled by smaller war-parties raised among the tribes on their own account. A strong expedition, led by Hamilton in person, would doubtless at this time have crushed them.

As it was, there were still so few whites in Kentucky that they were greatly outnumbered by the invading Indians. They were, in consequence, unable to meet the enemy in the open field, and gathered in their stations

[1] In the West this feat is as well known as is Putnam's similar deed in the North.

or forted villages. Therefore the early conflicts, for the most part, took the form of sieges of these wooden forts. Such sieges had little in common with the corresponding operations of civilized armies. The Indians usually tried to surprise a fort; if they failed, they occasionally tried to carry it by open assault, or by setting fire to it, but very rarely, indeed, beleaguered it in form. For this they lacked both the discipline and the commissariat. Accordingly, if their first rush miscarried, they usually dispersed in the woods to hunt, or look for small parties of whites; always, however, leaving some of their number to hover round the fort and watch anything that took place. Masters in the art of hiding, and able to conceal themselves behind a bush, a stone, or a tuft of weeds, they skulked round the gate before dawn, to shoot the white sentinels; or they ambushed the springs, and killed those who came for water; they slaughtered all of the cattle that had not been driven in, and any one venturing incautiously beyond the walls was certain to be waylaid and murdered. Those who were thus hemmed in the fort were obliged to get game on which to live; the hunters accordingly were accustomed to leave before daybreak, travel eight or ten miles, hunt all day at the risk of their lives, and return after dark. Being of course the picked men of the garrison, they often eluded the Indians, or slew them if an encounter took place, but very frequently indeed they were themselves slain. The Indians always trusted greatly to wiles and feints to draw their foes into their power. As ever in this woodland fighting, their superiority in hiding, or taking advantage of cover, counterbalanced the superiority of the whites as marksmen; and their war-parties were thus at least a match, man against man, for the Kentuckians, though the latter, together with the

Watauga men, were the best woodsmen and fighters of the frontier. Only a very few of the whites became, like Boone and Kenton, able to beat the best of the savages at their own game.

The innumerable sieges that took place during the long years of Indian warfare differed in detail, but generally closely resembled one another as regards the main points. Those that occurred in 1777 may be considered as samples of the rest; and accounts of these have been preserved by the two chief actors, Boone and Clark.[1] Boonesborough, which was held by twenty-two riflemen, was attacked twice, once in April and again in July, on each occasion by a party of fifty or a hundred warriors.[2] The first time the garrison was taken by surprise; one man lost his scalp, and four were wounded, including Boone himself, who had been commissioned as captain in the county militia.[3] The Indians promptly withdrew when they found they could not carry the fort by a sudden assault. On the second occasion the whites were on their guard, and though they had one man killed and two wounded (leaving but thirteen unhurt men in the fort), they easily beat off the assailants, and slew half a dozen of them. This time the Indians stayed around two days, keeping up a heavy fire, under cover of which they several times tried to burn the fort.[4]

[1] In Boone's "Narrative," written down by Filson, and in Clark's "Diary," as given by Morehead. The McAfee MSS. and Butler's history give some valuable information. Boone asserts that at this time the "Long Knives" proved themselves superior to their foe in almost every battle; but the facts do not seem to sustain him, though the statement was doubtless true as regards a few picked men. His estimates of the Indian numbers and losses must be received with great caution.

[2] Boone says April 15th and July 4th. Clark's "Diary" makes the first date April 24th. Boone says one hundred Indians, Clark "40 or 50." Clark's account of the loss on both sides agrees tolerably well with Boone's. Clark's "Diary" makes the second attack take place on May 23d. His dates are probably correct, as Boone must have written only from memory.

[3] Two of the other wounded men were Captain John Todd and Boone's old hunting companion, Stoner.

[4] Clark's "Diary."

Logan's Station at St. Asaphs was likewise attacked;[1] it was held by only fifteen gunmen. When the attack was made the women, guarded by part of the men, were milking the cows outside the fort. The Indians fired at them from the thick cane that stood near by, killing one man and wounding two others, one mortally.[2] The party, of course, fled to the fort, and on looking back they saw their mortally wounded friend weltering on the ground. His wife and family were within the walls; through the loopholes they could see him yet alive, and exposed every moment to death. So great was the danger that the men refused to go out to his rescue, whereupon Logan alone opened the gate, bounded out, and seizing the wounded man in his arms, carried him back unharmed through a shower of bullets. The Indians continued to lurk around the neighborhood, and the ammunition grew very scarce. Thereupon Logan took two companions and left the fort at night to go to the distant settlements on the Holston, where he might get powder and lead. He knew that the Indians were watching the Wilderness Road, and, trusting to his own hardiness and consummate woodcraft, he struck straight out across the cliff-broken, wood-covered mountains, sleeping wherever night overtook him, and travelling all day long with the tireless speed of a wolf.[3] He returned with the needed stores in ten days from the time he set out. These tided the people over the warm months.

In the fall, when the hickories had turned yellow

[1] Boone says July 19th, Clark's "Diary" makes it May 30th: Clark is undoubtedly right; he gives the names of the man who was killed and of the two who were wounded.

[2] The name of the latter was Burr Harrison; he died a fortnight afterward.—Clark.

Not a fanciful comparison; the wolf is the only animal that an Indian or a trained frontiersman cannot tire out in several days' travel. Following a deer two days in light snow, I have myself gotten near enough to shoot it without difficulty.

and the oaks deep red, during the weeks of still, hazy weather that mark the Indian summer, their favorite hunting-season,[1] the savages again filled the land, and Logan was obliged to repeat his perilous journey.[2] He also continually led small bands of his followers against the Indian war and hunting parties, sometimes surprising and dispersing them, and harassing them greatly. Moreover, he hunted steadily throughout the year, for the most skilful hunters were, in those days of scarcity, obliged to spend much of their time in the chase. Once, while at a noted game-lick, waiting for deer,[3] he was surprised by the Indians, and by their fire was wounded in the breast and had his right arm broken. Nevertheless, he sprang on his horse and escaped, though the savages were so close that one, leaping at him, for a moment grasped the tail of the horse. Every one of these pioneer leaders, from Clark and Boone to Sevier and Robertson, was required constantly to expose his life; each lost sons or brothers at the hands of the Indians, and each thinned the ranks of the enemy with his own rifle. In such a primitive state of society the man who led others was expected to show strength of body no less than strength of mind and heart; he depended upon his physical prowess almost as much as upon craft, courage, and head-work. The founder and head

[1] Usually early in November.—McAfee MSS. [2] Marshall, 50.

[3] These game-licks were common, and were of enormous extent. Multitudes of game, through countless generations, had tramped the ground bare of vegetation, and had made deep pits and channels with their hoofs and tongues. See McAfee MSS. Sometimes the licks covered acres of ground, while the game trails leading toward them through the wood were as broad as streets, even one hundred feet wide. I have myself seen small game-licks, the largest not a hundred feet across, in the Selkirks, Cœur d'Alênes, and Bighorns, the ground all tramped up by the hoofs of elk, deer, wild sheep, and white goats, with deep furrows and hollows where the saline deposits existed. In the Little Missouri Bad Lands there is so much mineral matter that no regular licks are needed. As the game is killed off the licks become overgrown and lost.

of each little community needed not only a shrewd brain and commanding temper, but also the thews and training to make him excel as woodsman and hunter, and the heart and eye to enable him to stand foremost in every Indian battle.

Clark spent most of the year at Harrodstown, taking part in the defense of Kentucky. All the while he was revolving in his bold, ambitious heart a scheme for the conquest of the Illinois country, and he sent scouts thither to spy out the land and report to him what they saw. The Indians lurked around Harrodstown throughout the summer; and Clark and his companions were engaged in constant skirmishes with them. Once, warned by the uneasy restlessness of the cattle (that were sure to betray the presence of Indians if they got sight or smell of them), they were able to surround a party of ten or twelve, who were hidden in a tall clump of weeds. The savages were intent on cutting off some whites who were working in a turnip-patch two hundred yards from the fort; Clark's party killed three—he himself killing one—wounded another, and sold the plunder they took, at auction, for seventy pounds. At other times the skirmishes resulted differently, as on the occasion chronicled by Clark in his diary, when they "went out to hunt Indians; one wounded Squire Boone and escaped." [1]

The corn was brought in from the cribs under guard; one day, while shelling a quantity, a body of thirty-seven whites was attacked, and seven were killed or wounded, though the Indians were beaten off and two scalps taken. In spite of this constant warfare, the fields near the forts were gradually cleared and planted with corn, pumpkins, and melons; and marrying and

[1] Clark's "Diary," entry for July 9th.

mirth-making went on within the walls. One of Clark's scouts, shortly after returning from the Illinois, got married, doubtless feeling he deserved some reward for the hardships he had suffered; on the wedding night Clark remarks that there was "great merriment." The rare and infrequent expresses from Pittsburg or Williamsburg brought letters telling of Washington's campaigns, which Clark read with absorbed interest. On the 1st of October, having matured his plans for the Illinois campaign, he left for Virginia, to see if he could get the government to help him put them into execution.

During the summer parties of backwoods militia from the Holston settlements—both Virginians and Carolinians—came out to help the Kentuckians in their struggle against the Indians; but they only stayed a few weeks, and then returned home. In the fall, however, several companies of immigrants came out across the mountains; and at the same time the small parties of hunters succeeded in pretty well clearing the woods of Indians. Many of the lesser camps and stations had been broken up and at the end of the year there remained only four—Boonesborough, Harrodstown, Logan's Station at St. Asaphs, and McGarry's at the Shawnee Springs. They contained in all some five or six hundred permanent settlers, nearly half of them being able-bodied riflemen.[1]

[1] The McAfee MSS. give these four stations; Boone says there were but three. He was writing from memory, however, and was probably mistaken; thus he says there were at that time settlers at the Falls, an evident mistake, as there were none there till the following year. Collins, following Marshall, says there were at the end of the year only 102 men in Kentucky — 65 at Harrodstown, 22 at Boonesborough, 15 at Logan's. This is a mistake based on a hasty reading of Boone's "Narrative," which gives this number for July, and particularly adds that after that date they began to strengthen. In the McAfee MSS. is a census of Harrodstown for the fall of 1777, which sums up: Men in service, 81; men not in service, 4; women, 24; children above ten, 12; children under ten, 58; slaves above ten, 12; slaves under

Early in 1778, a severe calamity befell the settlements. In January, Boone went, with twenty-nine other men, to the Blue Licks to make salt for the different garrisons—for hitherto this necessary of life had been brought in, at great trouble and expense, from the settlements.[1] The following month, having sent three men back with loads of salt, he and all the others were surprised and captured by a party of eighty or ninety Miamis, led by two Frenchmen, named Baubin and Lorimer.[2] When surrounded, so that there was no hope of escape, Boone agreed that all should surrender on condition of being well treated. The Indians on this occasion loyally kept faith. The two Frenchmen were anxious to improve their capture by attacking Boonesborough; but the fickle savages were satisfied with their success, and insisted on returning to their villages. Boone was taken, first to old Chillicothe, the chief Shawnee town on the Little Miami, and then to Detroit, where Hamilton and the other Englishmen treated him well, and tried to ransom him for a hundred pounds sterling. However, the Indians had become very much attached to him, and refused the ransom, taking their prisoner back to Chillicothe. Here he was adopted into the tribe, and remained for two months, winning the good-will of the Shawnees by his cheerfulness and his skill as a hunter, and being careful not to rouse their

ten, 7; total, 198. In October Clark in his "Diary" records meeting 50 men with their families (therefore permanent settlers), on their way to Boone, and 38 men on their way to Logan's. At the end of the year, therefore, Boonesborough and Harrodstown must have held about 200 souls apiece: Logan's and McGarry's were considerably smaller. The large proportion of young children testifies to the prolific nature of the Kentucky women, and also shows the permanent nature of the settlements. Two years previously, in 1775, there had been, perhaps, 300 people in Kentucky, but very many of them were not permanent residents.

[1] See Clark's "Diary," entry for October 25, 1777.

[2] Haldimand MSS., Series B, vol. CXXII, p. 35. Hamilton to Carleton, April 25, 1778. He says fourscore Miamis.

jealousy by any too great display of skill at the shooting-matches.

Hamilton was urging the Indians to repeat their ravages of the preceding year; Mingos, Shawnees, Delawares, and Miamis came to Detroit, bringing scalps and prisoners. A great council was held at that post early in June.[1] All the northwestern tribes took part, and they received war-belts from the Iroquois and messages calling on them to rise as one man. They determined forthwith to fall on the frontier in force. By their war-parties, and the accompanying bands of Tories, Hamilton sent placards to be distributed among the frontiersmen, endeavoring both by threat and by promise of reward, to make them desert the patriot cause.[2]

In June, a large war-party gathered at Chillicothe to march against Boonesborough, and Boone determined to escape at all hazards, so that he might warn his friends. One morning before sunrise he eluded the vigilance of his Indian companions and started straight through the woods for his home, where he arrived in four days, having had but one meal during the whole journey of a hundred and sixty miles.[3]

On reaching Boonesborough he at once set about putting the fort in good condition; and being tried by court martial for the capture at the Blue Licks, he was not only acquitted but was raised to the rank of major. His escape had probably disconcerted the Indian war-party, for no immediate attack was made on the fort. After waiting until August he got tired of the inaction, and made a foray into the Indian country himself with nineteen men, defeating a small party of his foes on the Scioto. At the same time he learned that the main body of the Miamis had at last marched against Boones-

[1] *Ibid.*, June 14, 1778. [2] *Ibid.*, April 25, 1778. [3] Boone's "Narrative."

borough. Instantly he retraced his steps with all possible speed, passed by the Indians and reached the threatened fort a day before they did.

On the eighth day of the month the savages appeared before the stockade. They were between three and four hundred in number, Shawnees and Miamis, and were led by Captain Daigniau de Quindre, a noted Detroit partisan;[1] with him were eleven other Frenchmen, besides the Indian chiefs. They marched into view with British and French colors flying, and formally summoned the little wooden fort to surrender in the name of his Britannic Majesty. The negotiations that followed showed, on the part of both whites and reds, a curious mixture of barbarian cunning and barbarian childishness; the account reads as if it were a page of Græco-Trojan diplomacy.[2] Boone first got a respite of two days to consider de Quindre's request, and occupied the time in getting the horses and cattle into the fort. At the end of the two days the Frenchman came in person to the walls to hear the answer to his proposition, whereupon Boone jeered at him for his simplicity, thanking him in the name of the defenders for having given them time to prepare for defense, and telling him that now they laughed at his attack. De Quindre, mortified at being so easily outwitted, set a trap in his turn for Boone. He assured the latter that his orders from Detroit were to capture, not to destroy, the garrison, and proposed that nine of their number should come out and hold a treaty. The terms of the treaty are not mentioned; apparently it was to be one of neutrality,

[1] Haldimand MSS. August 17, 1778, Girty reports that four hundred Indians have gone to attack "Fort Kentuck." Hamilton's letter of September 16th speaks of there being three hundred Shawnees with de Quindre (whom Boone calls Duquesne).

[2] See Boone's "Narrative."

Boonesborough, acting as if it were a little independent and sovereign commonwealth, making peace on its own account with a particular set of foes. At any rate, de Quindre agreed to march his forces peaceably off when it was concluded.

Boone accepted the proposition, but, being suspicious of the good faith of his opponents, insisted upon the conference being held within sixty yards of the fort. After the treaty was concluded the Indians proposed to shake hands with the nine white treaty-makers, and promptly grappled them.[1] However, the borderers wrested themselves free, and fled to the fort under a heavy fire, which wounded one of their number.

The Indians then attacked the fort, surrounding it on every side and keeping up a constant fire at the loop-holes. The whites replied in kind, but the combatants were so well covered that little damage was done. At night the Indians pitched torches of cane and hickory bark against the stockade, in the vain effort to set it on fire,[2] and de Quindre tried to undermine the walls, starting from the water-mark. But Boone discovered the attempt, and sunk a trench as a countermine. Then de Quindre gave up and retreated on August 20th, after nine days' fighting, in which the whites had but two killed and four wounded; nor was the loss of the Indians much heavier.[3]

[1] Apparently there were eighteen Indians on the treaty ground, but these were probably, like the whites, unarmed.

[2] McAfee MSS.

[3] De Quindre reported to Hamilton that, though foiled, he had but two men killed and three wounded.—In Haldimand MSS., Hamilton to Haldimand, October 15, 1778. Often, however, these partisan leaders merely reported the loss in their own particular party of savages, taking no account of the losses in the other bands that had joined them—as the Miamis joined the Shawnees in this instance. But it is certain that Boone (or Filson, who really wrote the "Narrative") greatly exaggerated the facts in stating that thirty-seven Indians were killed, and that the settlers picked up one hundred and twenty-five pounds' weight of bullets which had been fired into the fort.

This was the last siege of Boonesborough. Had de Quindre succeeded he might very probably have swept the whites from Kentucky; but he failed, and Boone's successful resistance, taken together with the outcome of Clark's operations at the same time, insured the permanency of the American occupation. The old-settled region lying around the original stations, or forts, was never afterward seriously endangered by Indian invasion.

The savages continued to annoy the border throughout the year 1778. The extent of their ravages can be seen from the fact that, during the summer months those around Detroit alone brought in to Hamilton eighty-one scalps and thirty-four prisoners,[1] seventeen of whom they surrendered to the British, keeping the others either to make them slaves or else to put them to death with torture. During the fall they confined themselves mainly to watching the Ohio and the Wilderness Road, and harassing the immigrants who passed along them.[2]

Boone, as usual, roamed restlessly over the country, spying out and harrying the Indian war-parties, and often making it his business to meet the incoming bands of settlers, and to protect and guide them on the way to their intended homes.[3] When not on other duty, he hunted steadily, for game was still plentiful in Kentucky, though fast diminishing, owing to the wanton slaughter made by some of the more reckless hunters.[4] He met with many adventures, still handed down by tradition, in the chase of panther, wolf, and bear, of

[1] Haldimand MSS. Letter of Hamilton, September 16, 1778. Hamilton was continually sending out small war-parties; thus he mentions that on August 25th a party of fifteen Miamis went out; on September 5th, thirty-one Miamis; on September 9th, one Frenchman, five Chippewas, and fifteen Miamis, etc.

[2] McAfee MSS. [3] Marshall, 55. [4] McAfee MSS.

buffalo, elk, and deer. The latter he killed only when their hides and meat were needed, while he followed unceasingly the dangerous beasts of prey, as being enemies of the settlers.

Throughout these years the obscure strife, made up of the individual contests of frontiersman and Indian, went on almost without a break. The sieges, surprises, and skirmishes in which large bands took part were chronicled; but there is little reference in the books to the countless conflicts wherein only one or two men on a side were engaged. The West could never have been conquered, in the teeth of so formidable and ruthless a foe, had it not been for the personal prowess of the pioneers themselves. Their natural courage and hardihood, and their long training in forest warfare,[1] made them able to hold their own and to advance step by step, where a peaceable population would have been instantly butchered or driven off. No regular army could have done what they did. Only trained woodsmen could have led the white advance into the vast forest-clad regions, out of which so many fair States have been hewn. The ordinary regular soldier was almost as helpless before the Indians in the woods as he would have been if blindfolded and opposed to an antagonist whose eyes were left uncovered.

Much the greatest loss, both to Indians and whites, was caused by this unending personal warfare. Every hunter, almost every settler, was always in imminent danger of Indian attack, and in return was ever ready, either alone or with one or two companions, to make excursions against the tribes for scalps and horses. One

[1] The last point is important. No Europeans could have held their own for a fortnight in Kentucky; nor is it likely that the Western men twenty years before, at the time of Braddock's war, could have successfully colonized such a far-off country.

or two of Simon Kenton's experiences during this year may be mentioned less for their own sake than as examples of innumerable similar deeds that were done, and woes that were suffered, in the course of the ceaseless struggle.

Kenton was a tall, fair-haired man of wonderful strength and agility; famous as a runner and wrestler, an unerring shot, and a perfect woodsman. Like so many of these early Indian fighters, he was not at all bloodthirsty. He was a pleasant, friendly, and obliging companion; and it was hard to rouse him to wrath. When once aroused, however, few were so hardy as not to quail before the terrible fury of his anger. He was so honest and unsuspecting that he was very easily cheated by sharpers; and he died a poor man. He was a stanch friend and follower of Boone.[1] Once, in a fight outside the stockade at Boonesborough, he saved the life of his leader by shooting an Indian who was on the point of tomahawking him. Boone was a man of few words, cold and grave, accustomed to every kind of risk and hairbreadth escape, and as little apt to praise the deeds of others as he was to mention his own; but on this occasion he broke through his usual taciturnity to express his thanks for Kenton's help and his admiration for Kenton himself.

Kenton went with his captain on the expedition to the Scioto. Pushing ahead of the rest, he was attracted

[1] See McClung's "Sketches of Western Adventure," pp. 86–117; the author had received from Kenton, and other pioneers, when very old, the tales of their adventures as young men. McClung's volume contains very valuable incidental information about the customs of life among the borderers, and about Indian warfare; but he is a very inaccurate and untrustworthy writer; he could not even copy a printed narrative correctly (see his account of Slover's and McKnight's adventures), and his tales about Kenton must be accepted rather as showing the adventures incident to the life of a peculiarly daring Indian fighter than as being specifically and chronologically correct in Kenton's individual case.

by the sound of laughter in a cane-brake. Hiding himself, he soon saw two Indians approach, both riding on one small pony, and chatting and laughing together in great good humor. Aiming carefully, he brought down both at once, one dead and the other severely wounded. As he rushed up to finish his work, his quick ears caught a rustle in the cane, and looking around he saw two more Indians aiming at him. A rapid spring to one side on his part made both balls miss. Other Indians came up; but, at the same time, Boone and his companions appeared, running as fast as they could while still keeping sheltered. A brisk skirmish followed, the Indians retreated, and Kenton got the coveted scalp. When Boone returned to the fort, Kenton stayed behind with another man and succeeded in stealing four good horses, which he brought back in triumph.

Much pleased with his success he shortly made another raid into the Indian country, this time with two companions. They succeeded in driving off a whole band of one hundred and sixty horses, which they brought in safety to the banks of the Ohio. But a strong wind was blowing, and the river was so rough that in spite of all their efforts they could not get the horses to cross; as soon as they were beyond their depth the beasts would turn round and swim back. The reckless adventurers could not make up their minds to leave the booty; and stayed so long, waiting for a lull in the gale, and wasting their time in trying to get the horses to take to the water in spite of the waves, that the pursuing Indians came up and surprised them. Their guns had become wet and useless, and no resistance could be made. One of them was killed, another escaped, and Kenton himself was captured.

The Indians asked him if "Captain Boone" had sent

him to steal horses; and when he answered frankly that the stealing was his own idea, they forthwith proceeded to beat him lustily with their ramrods, at the same time showering on him epithets that showed they had at least learned the profanity of the traders. They staked him out at night, tied so that he could move neither hand nor foot; and during the day he was bound on an unbroken horse, with his hands tied behind him so that he could not protect his face from the trees and bushes. This was repeated every day. After three days he reached the town of Chillicothe, stiff, sore, and bleeding.

Next morning he was led out to run the gantlet. A row of men, women, and boys, a quarter of a mile long, was formed, each with a tomahawk, switch, or club; at the end of the line was an Indian with a big drum, and beyond this was the council-house, which, if he reached, would for the time being protect him. The moment for starting arrived; the big drum was beaten; and Kenton sprang forward in the race.[1] Keeping his wits about him he suddenly turned to one side and darted off with the whole tribe after him. His wonderful speed and activity enabled him to keep ahead, and to dodge those who got in his way, and by a sudden double he rushed through an opening in the crowd, and reached the council-house, having been struck but three or four blows.

He was not further molested that evening. Next morning a council was held to decide whether he should be immediately burnt at the stake, or should first be led round to the different villages. The warriors sat in a ring to pass judgment, passing the war-club from one to another; those who passed it in silence thereby voted in favor of sparing the prisoner for the moment, while

[1] For this part of Kenton's adventures compare the "Last of the Mohicans."

those who struck it violently on the ground thus indicated their belief that he should be immediately put to death. The former prevailed, and Kenton was led from town to town. At each place he was tied to the stake, to be switched and beaten by the women and boys; or else was forced to run the gantlet, while sand was thrown in his eyes and guns loaded with powder fired against his body to burn his flesh.

Once, while on the march, he made a bold rush for liberty, all unarmed though he was; breaking out of the line and running into the forest. His speed was so great and his wind so good that he fairly outran his pursuers; but by ill luck, when almost exhausted, he came against another party of Indians. After this he abandoned himself to despair. He was often terribly abused by his captors; once one of them cut his shoulder open with an axe, breaking the bone.

His face was painted black, the death color, and he was twice sentenced to be burned alive, at the Pickaway plains and at Sandusky. But each time he was saved at the last moment, once through a sudden spasm of mercy on the part of the renegade Girty, his old companion in arms at the time of Lord Dunmore's war, and again by the powerful intercession of the great Mingo chief, Logan. At last, after having run the gantlet eight times and been thrice tied to the stake, he was ransomed by some traders. They hoped to get valuable information from him about the border forts, and took him to Detroit. Here he stayed until his battered, wounded body was healed. Then he determined to escape, and formed his plan in concert with two other Kentuckians, who had been in Boone's party that was captured at the Blue Licks. They managed to secure some guns, got safely off, and came straight down

through the great forests to the Ohio, reaching their homes in safety.[1]

Boone and Kenton have always been favorite heroes of frontier story—as much so as ever were Robin Hood and Little John in England. Both lived to a great age, and did and saw many strange things, and in the backwoods cabins the tale of their deeds has been handed down in traditional form from father to son and to son's son. They were known to be honest, fearless, adventurous, mighty men of their hands; fond of long, lonely wanderings; renowned as woodsmen and riflemen, as hunters and Indian fighters. In course of time it naturally came about that all notable incidents of the chase and woodland warfare were incorporated into their lives by the story-tellers. The facts were altered and added to by tradition year after year; so that the two old frontier warriors already stand in that misty group of heroes whose rightful title to fame has been partly overclouded by the haze of their mythical glories and achievements.

NOTE

During the early part of this century our more pretentious historians who really did pay some heed to facts and wrote books that—in addition to their mortal dulness—were quite accurate, felt it undignified and beneath them to notice the deeds of mere ignorant Indian fighters. They had lost all power of doing the best work; for they passed their lives in a circle of small literary men, who shrank from any departure from conventional European standards.

[1] McClung gives the exact conversations that took place between Kenton, Logan, Girty, and the Indian chiefs. They are very dramatic, and may possibly be true; the old pioneer would probably always remember even the words used on such occasions; but I hesitate to give them because McClung is so loose in his statements. In the account of this very incident he places it in '77, and says Kenton then accompanied Clark to the Illinois. But in reality — as we know from Boone — it took place in '78, and Kenton must have gone with Clark first.

On the other hand, the men who wrote history for the mass of our people, not for the scholars, although they preserved much important matter, had not been educated up to the point of appreciating the value of evidence, and accepted undoubted facts and absurd traditions with equal good faith. Some of them (notably Flint and one or two of Boone's other biographers) evidently scarcely regarded truthfulness and accuracy of statement as being even desirable qualities in a history. Others wished to tell the facts, but lacked all power of discrimination. Certain of their books had a very wide circulation. In some out-of-the-way places they formed, with the almanac, the staple of secular literature. But they did not come under the consideration of trained scholars, so their errors remained uncorrected; and at this day it is a difficult, and often an impossible task, to tell which of the statements to accept and which to reject.

Many of the earliest writers lived when young among the old companions of the leading pioneers, and long afterward wrote down from memory the stories the old men had told them. They were themselves often clergymen, and were usually utterly inexperienced in wild backwoods life, in spite of their early surroundings—exactly as to-day any town in the Rocky Mountains is sure to contain some half-educated men as ignorant of mountain and plains life, of Indians and wild beasts, as the veriest lout on an Eastern farm. Accordingly, they accepted the wildest stories of frontier warfare with a faith that forcibly reminds one of the equally simple credulity displayed by the average classical scholar concerning early Greek and Roman prowess. Many of these primitive historians give accounts of overwhelming Indian numbers and enormous Indian losses that read as if taken from the books that tell of the Gaulish hosts the Romans conquered, and the Persian hordes the Greeks repelled; and they are almost as untrustworthy.

Some of the anecdotes they relate are not far removed from the Chinese-like tale—given, if my memory is correct, in Herodotus—of the Athenian soldier who went into action with a small grapnel or anchor attached by a chain to his waist, that he might tether himself out to resist the shock of the charging foe. A flagrant example is the story which

describes how the white man sees an Indian very far off making insulting gestures; how he forthwith loads his rifle with two bullets—which the narrator evidently thinks will go twice as far and twice as straight as one—and, taking careful aim, slays his enemy. Like other similar anecdotes, this is told of a good many different frontier heroes, the historian usually showing a delightful lack of knowledge of what is and what is not possible in hunting, tracking, and fighting. However, the utter ignorance of even the elementary principles of rifle-shooting may not have been absolutely confined to the historians. Any one accustomed to old hunters knows that their theories concerning their own weapons are often rather startling. A year ago last fall I was hunting some miles below my ranch (on the Little Missouri) to lay in the winter stock of meat, and was encamped for a week with an old hunter. We both had 45–75 Winchester rifles; and I was much amused at his insisting that his gun "shot level" up to two hundred yards—a distance at which the ball really drops considerably over a foot. Yet he killed a good deal of game; so he must either in practice have disregarded his theories, or else he must have always overestimated the distances at which he fired.

The old writers of the simpler sort not only delighted in impossible feats with the rifle, but in equally impossible deeds of strength, tracking, and the like; and they were very fond of attributing all the wonderful feats of which they had heard to a single favorite hero, not to speak of composing speeches for him.

It seems—though it ought not to be—necessary to point out to some recent collectors of backwoods anecdotes, the very obvious truths; that with the best intentions in the world the average backwoodsman often has difficulty in describing a confused chain of events exactly as they took place; that when the events are described after a long lapse of years many errors are apt to creep in; and that when they are reported from tradition it is the rarest thing imaginable for the report to be correct.

CHAPTER XIV

CLARK'S CONQUEST OF THE ILLINOIS

1778

KENTUCKY had been settled, chiefly through Boone's instrumentality, in the year that saw the first fighting of the Revolution, and it had been held ever since, Boone still playing the greatest part in the defense. Clark's more far-seeing and ambitious soul now prompted him to try and use it as a base from which to conquer the vast region northwest of the Ohio.

The country beyond the Ohio was not, like Kentucky, a tenantless and debatable hunting-ground. It was the seat of powerful and warlike Indian confederacies, and of clusters of ancient French hamlets which had been founded generations before the Kentucky pioneers were born; and it also contained posts that were garrisoned and held by the soldiers of the British king. Virginia, and other colonies as well, made, it is true, vague claims to some of this territory.[1] But their titles were as unreal and shadowy as those acquired by the Spanish and Portuguese kings when the Pope, with empty munificence, divided between them the eastern and the west-

[1] Some of the numerous land-speculation companies, which were so prominent about this time, both before and after the Revolution, made claims to vast tracts of territory in this region, having bought them for various trinkets from the Indian chiefs. Such were the "Illinois Land Company" and "Wabash Land Company," that, in 1773 and 1775, made purchases from the Kaskaskias and Piankeshaws. The companies were composed of British, American, and Canadian merchants and traders, of London, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Quebec, etc. Lord Dunmore was in the Wabash Company. The agents of the companies, in after-years, made repeated but unsuccessful efforts to get Congress to confirm their grants. Although these various companies made much noise at the time, they introduced no new settlers into the land, and, in fact, did nothing of lasting effect; so that it is mere waste of time to allude to most of them. See, however, the "History of Indiana," by John B. Dillon (Indianapolis, 1859), pp. 102–109, etc.

ern hemispheres. For a century the French had held adverse possession; for a decade and a half the British, not the colonial authorities, had acted as their unchallenged heirs; to the Americans the country was as much a foreign land as was Canada. It could only be acquired by force, and Clark's teeming brain and bold heart had long been busy in planning its conquest. He knew that the French villages, the only settlements in the land, were the seats of the British power, the headquarters whence their commanders stirred up, armed, and guided the hostile Indians. If these settled French districts were conquered, and the British posts that guarded them captured, the whole territory would thereby be won for the Federal Republic, and added to the heritage of its citizens; while the problem of checking and subduing the northwestern Indians would be greatly simplified, because the source of much of both their power and hostility would be cut off at the springs. The friendship of the French was invaluable, for they had more influence than any other people with the Indians.

In 1777, Clark sent two young hunters as spies to the Illinois country and to the neighborhood of Vincennes, though neither to them nor to any one else did he breathe a hint of the plan that was in his mind. They brought back word that, though some of the adventurous young men often joined either the British or the Indian war-parties, yet that the bulk of the French population took but little interest in the struggle, were lukewarm in their allegiance to the British flag, and were somewhat awed by what they had heard of the backwoodsmen.[1] Clark judged from this report that

[1] The correctness of this account is amply confirmed by the Haldimand MSS., letters of Hamilton, *passim;* also Rocheblave to Carleton, July 4, 1778; and to Hamilton, April 12, 1778.

it would not be difficult to keep the French neutral if a bold policy, strong as well as conciliatory, was pursued toward them; and that but a small force would be needed to enable a resolute and capable leader to conquer at least the southern part of the country. It was impossible to raise such a body among the scantily garrisoned forted villages of Kentucky. The pioneers, though warlike and fond of fighting, were primarily settlers; their soldiering came in as a purely secondary occupation. They were not a band of mere adventurers, living by the sword and bent on nothing but conquest. They were a group of hard-working, hard-fighting freemen, who had come in with their wives and children to possess the land. They were obliged to use all their wit and courage to defend what they had already won without wasting their strength by grasping at that which lay beyond. The very conditions that enabled so small a number to make a permanent settlement forbade their trying unduly to extend its bounds.

Clark knew he could get from among his fellow settlers some men peculiarly suited for his purpose, but he also realized that he would have to bring the body of his force from Virginia. Accordingly, he decided to lay the case before Patrick Henry, then governor of the State of which Kentucky was only a frontier county.

On October 1, 1777, he started from Harrodsburg,[1] to go over the Wilderness Road. The brief entries of his diary for this trip are very interesting and sometimes very amusing. Before starting, he made a rather shrewd and thoroughly characteristic speculation in horse-flesh, buying a horse for twelve pounds, and then "swapping" it with Isaac Shelby and getting ten pounds to boot.

[1] In the earlier MSS. it is called sometimes Harrodstown and sometimes Harrodsburg; but from this time on the latter name is in general use.

He evidently knew how to make a good bargain, and had the true backwoods passion for barter. He was detained a couple of days by that commonest of frontier mischances, his horses straying; a natural incident when the animals were simply turned loose on the range and looked up when required.[1] He travelled in company with a large party of men, women, and children who, disheartened by the Indian ravages, were going back to the settlements. They marched from fifteen to twenty miles a day, driving beeves along for food. In addition, the scouts at different times killed three buffalo[2] and a few deer, so that they were not stinted for fresh meat.

When they got out of the wilderness he parted from his companions and rode off alone. He now stayed at the settler's house that was nearest when night overtook him. At a large house, such as that of the Campbells, near Abingdon, he was of course welcomed to the best, and treated with a generous hospitality for which it would have been an insult to offer money in return. At the small cabins he paid his way; usually a shilling and threepence or a shilling and sixpence for breakfast, bed, and feed for the horse; but sometimes four or five shillings. He fell in with a Captain Campbell, with whom he journeyed a week, finding him "an agreeable companion." They had to wait over one stormy day at a little tavern, and probably whiled away the time by as much of a carouse as circumstances allowed; at any rate, Clark's share of the bill when he left was one pound four shillings.[3] Finally, a month after leav-

[1] This, like so many other incidents in the every-day history of the old pioneers, is among the ordinary experiences of the present sojourner in the far West.

[2] One at Rockcastle River, two at Cumberland Ford.

[3] The items of expense jotted down in the diary are curious. For a night's lodging and board they range from 1*s.* 3*d.* to 13*s.* In Williamsburg, the capital, they were for a fortnight £9 18*s.*

ing Harrodsburg, having travelled six hundred and twenty miles, he reached his father's house.[1]

After staying only a day at his old home, he set out for Williamsburg, where he was detained a fortnight before the State auditors would settle the accounts of the Kentucky militia, which he had brought with him. The two things which he deemed especially worthy of mention during this time were his purchase of a ticket in the State lottery, for three pounds, and his going to church on Sunday—the first chance he had had to do so during the year.[2] He was overjoyed at the news of Burgoyne's surrender; and with a light heart he returned to his father's house, to get a glimpse of his people before again plunging into the wilds.

After a week's rest he went back to the capital, laid his plans before Patrick Henry, and urged their adoption with fiery enthusiasm.[3] Henry's ardent soul quickly caught flame; but the peril of sending an expedition to such a wild and distant country was so great, and Virginia's resources were so exhausted, that he could do little beyond lending Clark the weight of his name and influence. The matter could not be laid before the Assembly, nor made public in any way; for the hazard would be increased tenfold if the strictest secrecy were

[1] Seventy miles beyond Charlottesville; he gives an itinerary of his journey, making it six hundred and twenty miles in all, by the route he travelled. On the way he had his horse shod and bought a pair of shoes for himself; apparently, he kept the rest of his backwoods apparel. He sold his gun for £15 and swapped horses again—this time giving £7 10*s.* to boot.

[2] When his accounts were settled he immediately bought "a piece of cloth for a jacket; price £4 15*s.*; buttons, etc., 3*s.*"

[3] Clark has left a full MS. "Memoir" of the events of 1777, 1778, and 1779. It was used extensively by Mann Butler, the first historian who gave the campaign its proper prominence, and is printed almost complete by Dillon, on pp. 115–167 of his "Indiana." It was written at the desire of Presidents Jefferson and Madison, and therefore some thirty or forty years after the events of which it speaks. Valuable though it is, as the narrative of the chief actor, it would be still more valuable had it been written earlier; it undoubtedly contains some rather serious errors.

not preserved. Finally, Henry authorized Clark to raise seven companies, each of fifty men, who were to act as militia and to be paid as such.[1] He also advanced him the sum of twelve hundred pounds (presumably in depreciated paper), and gave him an order on the authorities at Pittsburg for boats, supplies, and ammunition; while three of the most prominent Virginia gentlemen[2] agreed in writing to do their best to induce the Virginia legislature to grant to each of the adventurers three hundred acres of the conquered land, if they were successful. He was likewise given the commission of colonel, with instructions to raise his men solely from the frontier counties west of the Blue Ridge,[3] so as not to weaken the people of the seacoast region in their struggle against the British.

Thus the whole burden of making ready the expedition was laid on Clark's shoulders. The hampered Virginian authorities were able to give him little beyond their good-will. He is rightfully entitled to the whole glory; the plan and execution were both his. It was an individual rather than a State or national enterprise.

Governor Henry's open letter of instructions merely ordered Clark to go to the relief of Kentucky. He carried with him also the secret letter which bade him attack the Illinois region; for he had decided to assail this first, because, if defeated, he would then be able to take refuge in the Spanish dominions beyond the Mississippi. He met with the utmost difficulty in raising men. Some were to be sent to him from the Holston overland, to meet him in Kentucky; but a combination of accidents resulted in his getting only a dozen or so

[1] Henry's private letter of instructions, January 2, 1778.

[2] Thomas Jefferson, George Mason, and George Wythe.

[3] Butler, p. 48; but Henry's public instructions authorized Clark to raise his men in any county.

from this source.[1] Around Pittsburg the jealousy between the Virginians and Pennsylvanians hampered him greatly. Moreover, many people were strongly opposed to sending any men to Kentucky at all, deeming the drain on their strength more serious than the value of the new land warranted; for they were too short-sighted rightly to estimate what the frontiersmen had really done. When he had finally raised his troops he was bothered by requests from the different forts to aid detachments of the local militia in expeditions against bands of marauding Indians.

But Clark never for a moment wavered nor lost sight of his main object. He worked steadily on, heedless of difficulty and disappointment, and late in the spring at last got together four small companies of frontiersmen from the clearings and the scattered hunters' camps. In May, 1778, he left the Redstone settlements, taking not only his troops—one hundred and fifty in all[2]—but also a considerable number of private adventurers and settlers with their families. He touched at Pittsburg and Wheeling to get his stores. Then the flotilla of clumsy flatboats, manned by tall riflemen, rowed and drifted cautiously down the Ohio between the melancholy and unbroken reaches of Indian-haunted forest. The presence of the families shows that even this expedition had the usual peculiar Western character of being undertaken half for conquest, half for settlement.

He landed at the mouth of the Kentucky, but rightly concluded that as a starting-point against the British

[1] Four companies were to be raised on the Holston; but only one actually went to Kentucky; and most of its members deserted when they found out about the true nature of the expedition.

[2] Clark's letter to George Mason, November 19, 1779. Given in "Clark's Campaign in the Illinois" (Cincinnati, 1869), for the first time; one of Robert Clarke's excellent Ohio Valley Historical Series.

posts it would be better to choose a place farther west, so he drifted on down the stream, and on the 27th of May[1] reached the Falls of the Ohio, where the river broke into great rapids or riffles of swift water. This spot he chose, both because from it he could threaten and hold in check the different Indian tribes, and because he deemed it wise to have some fort to protect in the future the craft that might engage in the river trade, when they stopped to prepare for the passage of the rapids. Most of the families that had come with him had gone off to the interior of Kentucky, but several were left, and these settled on an island near the Falls, where they raised a crop of corn; and in the autumn they moved to the mainland. On the site thus chosen by the clear-eyed frontier leader there afterward grew up a great city, named in honor of the French king, who was then our ally. Clark may fairly be called its founder.[2]

Here Clark received news of the alliance with France, which he hoped would render easier his task of winning over the habitants of the Illinois. He was also joined by a few daring Kentuckians, including Kenton, and by the only Holston company that had yet arrived. He now disclosed to his men the real object of his expedition. The Kentuckians, and those who had come down the river with him, hailed the adventure with eager

[1] This is the date given in the deposition, in the case of Floyd's heirs, in 1815; see MSS. in Colonel Durrett's library at Louisville. Clark's dates, given from memory, are often a day or two out. His "Memoir" is of course less accurate than the letter to Mason.

[2] It was named Louisville in 1780, but was long known only as the Falls. Many other men had previously recognized the advantages of the place; hunters and surveyors had gone there, but Clark led thither the first permanent settlers. Conolly had laid out at the Falls a grant of two thousand acres, of which he afterward surrendered half. His grant, covering much of the present site of the city, was on July 1, 1780, declared to be forfeited by a jury consisting of Daniel Boone and eleven other good men and true, empanelled by the sheriff of the county. See Durrett MSS. in "Papers Relating to Louisville, Ky."

enthusiasm, pledged him their hearty support, and followed him with stanch and unflinching loyalty. But the Holston recruits, who had not come under the spell of his personal influence, murmured against him. They had not reckoned on an expedition so long and so dangerous, and in the night most of them left the camp and fled into the woods. The Kentuckians, who had horses, pursued the deserters, with orders to kill any who resisted; but all save six or eight escaped. Yet they suffered greatly for their crime, and endured every degree of hardship and fatigue, for the Kentuckians spurned them from the gates of the wooden forts, and would not for a long time suffer them to enter, hounding them back to the homes they had dishonored. They came from among a bold and adventurous people, and their action was due rather to wayward and sullen disregard of authority than to cowardice.

When the pursuing horsemen came back, a day of mirth and rejoicing was spent between the troops who were to stay behind to guard Kentucky and those who were to go onward to conquer Illinois. On the 24th of June, Clark's boats put out from shore, and shot the Falls at the very moment that there was a great eclipse of the sun, at which the frontiersmen wondered greatly, but for the most part held it to be a good omen.

Clark had weeded out all those whom he deemed unable to stand fatigue and hardship; his four little companies were of picked men, each with a good captain.[1] His equipment was as light as that of an Indian war-party, for he knew better than to take a pound of baggage that could possibly be spared.

[1] The names of the four captains were John Montgomery, Joseph Bowman, Leonard Helm, and William Harrod. Each company nominally consisted of fifty men, but none of them was of full strength.

He intended to land some three leagues below the entrance of the Tennessee River,[1] thence to march on foot against the Illinois towns; for he feared discovery if he should attempt to ascend the Mississippi, the usual highway by which the fur traders went up to the quaint French hamlets that lay between the Kaskaskia and the Illinois rivers. Accordingly, he double-manned his oars and rowed night and day until he reached a small island off the mouth of the Tennessee, where he halted to make his final preparations, and was there joined by a little party of American hunters, who had recently been in the French settlements.[2] The meeting was most fortunate. The hunters entered eagerly into Clark's plans, joining him for the campaign, and they gave him some very valuable information. They told him that the royal commandant was a Frenchman, Rocheblave, whose headquarters were at the town of Kaskaskia; that the fort was in good repair, the militia were well drilled and in constant readiness to repel attack, while spies were continually watching the Mississippi, and the Indians and the *coureurs de bois* were warned to be on the lookout for any American force. If the party were discovered in time the hunters believed that the French would undoubtedly gather together instantly to repel them, having been taught to hate and dread the backwoodsmen as more brutal and terrible than any Indians; and in such an event the strength of the works and the superiority of the French in numbers would render the attack very hazardous. But they thought that a surprise would enable Clark to do as he wished,

[1] At the old Fort Massac, then deserted. The name is taken from that of an old French commander; it is not a corruption of Fort Massacre, as has been asserted.

[2] In his "Memoir" he says "from the States"; in his letter to Mason he calls them "Englishmen," probably to show that they were not French, as they had just come from Kaskaskia. He almost always spoke of the English proper as British.

and they undertook to guide him by the quickest and shortest route to the towns.

Clark was rather pleased than otherwise to learn of the horror with which the French regarded the backwoodsmen. He thought it would render them more apt to be panic-struck when surprised, and also more likely to feel a strong revulsion of gratitude when they found that the Americans meant them well and not ill. Taking their new allies for guides, the little body of less than two hundred men started north across the wilderness, scouts being scattered out well ahead of them, both to kill game for their subsistence and to see that their march was not discovered by any straggling Frenchman or Indian. The first fifty miles led through tangled and pathless forest, the toil of travelling being very great. After that the work was less difficult as they got out among the prairies, but on these great level meadows they had to take extra precautions to avoid being seen. Once the chief guide got bewildered and lost himself; he could no longer tell the route, nor whither it was best to march.[1] The whole party was at once cast into the utmost confusion; but Clark soon made the guide understand that he was himself in greater jeopardy than any one else, and would forfeit his life if he did not guide them straight. Not knowing the man, Clark thought he might be treacherous; and, as he wrote an old friend, he was never in his life in such a rage as when he found his troops wandering at random in a country where, at any moment, they might blunder on several times their number of hostile Indians; while, if they were discovered by any one at all, the whole expedition was sure to mis-

[1] Even experienced woodsmen or plainsmen sometimes thus become lost or "turned round," if in a country of few landmarks, where they have rarely been before.

carry. However, the guide proved to be faithful; after a couple of hours he found his bearings once more, and guided the party straight to their destination.

On the evening of the 4th of July[1] they reached the River Kaskaskia, within three miles of the town, which lay on the farther bank. They kept in the woods until after it grew dusk, and then marched silently to a little farm on the hither side of the river, a mile from the town. The family were taken prisoners, and from them Clark learned that some days before the townspeople had been alarmed at the rumor of a possible attack; but that their suspicions had been lulled, and they were then off their guard. There were a great many men in the town, but almost all French, the Indians having for the most part left. The account proved correct. Rocheblave, the creole commandant, was sincerely attached to the British interest. He had been much alarmed early in the year by the reports brought to him by Indians that the Americans were in Kentucky and elsewhere beyond the Alleghanies. He had written repeatedly to Detroit, asking that regulars could be sent him, and that he might himself be replaced by a commandant of English birth; for, though the French were well disposed toward the Crown, they had been frightened by the reports of the ferocity of the backwoodsmen, and the Indians were fickle. In his letters he mentioned that the French were much more loyal than the men of English parentage. Hamilton found it impossible to send him reinforcements, however, and he was forced

[1] So says Clark; and the Haldimand MSS. contain a letter of Rocheblave of July 4th. For these campaigns of 1778 I follow, where possible, Clark's letter to Mason as being nearly contemporary; his "Memoir," as given by Dillon, comes next in authority; while Butler, who was very accurate and painstaking, also got hold of original information from men who had taken part in the expedition, or from their descendants, besides making full use of the "Memoir."

to do the best he could without them; but he succeeded well in his endeavors to organize troops, as he found the creole militia very willing to serve, and the Indians extremely anxious to attack the Americans.[1] He had under his orders two or three times as many men as Clark, and he would certainly have made a good fight if he had not been surprised. It was only Clark's audacity and the noiseless speed of his movements that gave him a chance of success, with the odds so heavily against him.

Getting boats, the American leader ferried his men across the stream under cover of the darkness and in profound silence, the work occupying about two hours. He then approached Kaskaskia under cover of the night, dividing his force into two divisions, one being spread out to surround the town so that none might escape, while he himself led the other up to the walls of the fort.

Inside the fort the lights were lit, and through the windows came the sounds of violins. The officers of the post had given a ball, and the mirth-loving creoles, young men and girls, were dancing and revelling within, while the sentinels had left their posts. One of his captives showed Clark a postern-gate by the riverside, and through this he entered the fort, having placed his men roundabout at the entrance. Advancing to the great hall where the revel was held, he leaned silently with folded arms against the door-post, looking at the dancers. An Indian, lying on the floor of the entry, gazed intently on the stranger's face as the light from the torches within flickered across it, and suddenly sprang to his feet, uttering the unearthly war-whoop.

[1] Haldimand MSS., Carleton to Hamilton, May 16, 1777; Rocheblave to Carleton, February 8, 1778; Rocheblave to Hamilton, April 12, 1778; Rocheblave to Carleton, July 4, 1778.

Instantly the dancing ceased; the women screamed, while the men ran toward the door. But Clark, standing unmoved and with unchanged face, grimly bade them continue their dancing, but to remember that they now danced under Virginia and not Great Britain.[1] At the same time his men burst into the fort, and seized the French officers, including the commandant, Rocheblave.[2]

Immediately, Clark had every street secured, and sent runners through the town ordering the people to keep close to their houses on pain of death; and by daylight he had them all disarmed. The backwoodsmen patrolled the town in little squads, while the French in silent terror cowered within their low-roofed houses. Clark was quite willing that they should fear the worst; and their panic was very great. The unlooked-for and mysterious approach and sudden onslaught of the backwoodsmen, their wild and uncouth appearance, and the ominous silence of their commander, all combined to fill the French with fearful forebodings for their future fate.[3]

Next morning a deputation of the chief men waited

[1] "Memoir of Major E. Denny," by Wm. H. Denny, p. 217. In "Record of the Court of Upland and Military Journal of Major E. Denny," Philadelphia, 1860 (Historical Society of Pennsylvania). The story was told to Major Denny by Clark himself, some time in '87 or '88; in process of repetition it evidently became twisted, and, as related by Denny, there are some very manifest inaccuracies, but there seems no reason to reject it entirely.

[2] It is worth noting that these Illinois French, and most of the Indians with whom the French fur traders came in contact, called the Americans "Bostonnais." (In fact, the fur traders have taught this name to the Northern tribes right across to the Pacific. While hunting in the Selkirk Mountains last fall, the Kootenai Indian who was with me always described me as a "Boston man.") Similarly, the Indians round the upper Ohio and thence southward often called the backwoodsmen "Virginians." In each case the French and Indians adopted the name of their leading and most inveterate enemies as the title by which to call all of them.

[3] In his "Memoir" Clark dwells at length on the artifices by which he heightened the terror of the French; and Butler enlarges still further upon them. I follow the letter to Mason, which is much safer authority, the writer having then no thought of trying to increase the dramatic effect of the situation—which, in Butler, and indeed in the "Memoir" also, is strained till it comes dangerously near bathos.

upon Clark; and, thinking themselves in the hands of mere brutal barbarians, all they dared to do was to beg for their lives, which they did, says Clark, "with the greatest servancy [saying] they were willing to be slaves to save their families," though the bolder spirits could not refrain from cursing their fortune that they had not been warned in time to defend themselves. Now came Clark's chance for his winning stroke. He knew it was hopeless to expect his little band permanently to hold down a much more numerous hostile population, that was closely allied to many surrounding tribes of warlike Indians; he wished above all things to convert the inhabitants into ardent adherents of the American Government.

So he explained at length that, though the Americans came as conquerors, who by the laws of war could treat the defeated as they wished, yet it was ever their principle to free, not to enslave, the people with whom they came in contact. If the French chose to become loyal citizens, and to take the oath of fidelity to the Republic, they should be welcomed to all the privileges of Americans; those who did not so choose should be allowed to depart from the land in peace with their families.

The mercurial creoles who listened to his speech passed rapidly from the depth of despair to the height of joy. Instead of bewailing their fate they now could not congratulate themselves enough on their good fortune. The crowning touch to their happiness was given by Clark when he told the priest, Pierre Gibault, in answer to a question as to whether the Catholic Church could be opened, that an American commander had nothing to do with any church save to defend it from insult, and that by the laws of the Republic his religion had as great privileges as any other. With that they

all returned in noisy joy to their families, while the priest, a man of ability and influence, became thenceforth a devoted and effective champion of the American cause. The only person whom Clark treated harshly was M. Rocheblave, the commandant, who, when asked to dinner, responded in very insulting terms. Thereupon Clark promptly sent him as a prisoner to Virginia (where he broke his parole and escaped), and sold his slaves for five hundred pounds, which was distributed among the troops as prize-money.

A small detachment of the Americans, accompanied by a volunteer company of French militia, at once marched rapidly on Cahokia. The account of what had happened in Kaskaskia, and the news of the alliance between France and America, and the enthusiastic advocacy of Clark's new friends, soon converted Cahokia; and all of its inhabitants, like those of Kaskaskia, took the oath of allegiance to America. Almost at the same time the priest Gibault volunteered to go, with a few of his compatriots, to Vincennes, and there endeavor to get the people to join the Americans, as being their natural friends and allies. He started on his mission at once, and on the 1st of August returned to Clark with the news that he had been completely successful, that the entire population, after having gathered in the church to hear him, had taken the oath of allegiance, and that the American flag floated over their fort.[1] No garrison could be spared to go to Vincennes; so one of the captains[2] was sent thither alone to take command.

The priest Gibault had given convincing proof of his loyalty. He remarked to Clark rather dryly that he had, properly speaking, nothing to do with the tem-

[1] Judge John Law's "Address on the Colonial History of Vincennes," p. 25.
[2] Leonard Helm.

poral affairs of his flock, but that now and then he was able to give them such hints in a spiritual way as would tend to increase their devotion to their new friends.

Clark now found himself in a position of the utmost difficulty. With a handful of unruly backwoodsmen, imperfectly disciplined and kept under control only by his own personal influence, he had to protect and govern a region as large as any European kingdom. Moreover, he had to keep content and loyal a population of alien race, creed, and language, while he held his own against the British and against numerous tribes of Indians, deeply embittered against all Americans and as bloodthirsty and treacherous as they were warlike. It may be doubted if there was another man in the West who possessed the daring and resolution, the tact, energy, and executive ability necessary for the solution of so knotty a series of problems.

He was hundreds of miles from the nearest post containing any American troops; he was still farther from the seat of government. He had no hope whatever of getting reinforcements or even advice and instruction for many months, probably not for a year; and he was thrown entirely on his own resources and obliged to act in every respect purely on his own responsibility.

Governor Patrick Henry, although leaving everything in the last resort to Clark's discretion, had evidently been very doubtful whether a permanent occupation of the territory was feasible,[1] though both he,

[1] In his secret letter of instructions he orders Clark to be especially careful to secure the artillery and military stores at Kaskaskia, laying such stress upon this as to show that he regarded the place itself as of comparatively little value. In fact, all Henry's order contemplated was an attack on "the British post at Kaskasky." However, he adds, that if the French are willing to become American citizens, they shall be fully protected against their foes. The letter earnestly commands Clark to treat not only the inhabitants, but also all British prisoners, with the utmost humanity.

and especially Jefferson, recognized the important bearing that its acquisition would have upon the settlement of the northwestern boundary when the time came to treat for peace. Probably Clark himself had not at first appreciated all the possibilities that lay within his conquest, but he was fully alive to them now and saw that, provided he could hold on to it, he had added a vast and fertile territory to the domain of the Union. To the task of keeping it he now bent all his energies.

The time of service of his troops had expired, and they were anxious to go home. By presents and promises he managed to enlist one hundred of them for eight months longer. Then, to color his staying with so few men, he made a feint of returning to the Falls, alleging as a reason his entire confidence in the loyalty of his French friends and his trust in their capacity to defend themselves. He hoped that this would bring out a remonstrance from the inhabitants, who, by becoming American citizens, had definitely committed themselves against the British. The result was such as he expected. On the rumor of his departure, the inhabitants in great alarm urged him to stay, saying that otherwise the British would surely take the post. He made a show of reluctantly yielding to their request, and consented to stay with two companies; and then, finding that many of the more adventurous young creoles were anxious to take service, he enlisted enough of them to fill up all four companies to their original strength. His whole leisure was spent in drilling the men, Americans and French alike, and in a short time he turned them into as orderly and well-disciplined a body as could be found in any garrison of regulars.

He also established very friendly relations with the Spanish captains of the scattered creole villages across

the Mississippi, for the Spaniards were very hostile to the British, and had not yet begun to realize that they had even more to dread from the Americans. Clark has recorded his frank surprise at finding the Spanish commandant, who lived at St. Louis, a very pleasant and easy companion, instead of haughty and reserved, as he had supposed all Spaniards were.

The most difficult, and among the most important, of his tasks was dealing with the swarm of fickle and treacherous savage tribes that surrounded him. They had hitherto been hostile to the Americans; but being great friends of the Spaniards and French they were much confused by the change in the sentiments of the latter, and by the sudden turn affairs had taken.

Some volunteers—Americans, French, and friendly Indians—were sent to the aid of the American captain at Vincennes, and the latter, by threats and promises, and a mixture of diplomatic speechmaking with a show of force, contrived, for the time being, to pacify the immediately neighboring tribes.

Clark took upon himself the greater task of dealing with a huge horde of savages, representing every tribe between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi, who had come to the Illinois, some from a distance of five hundred miles, to learn accurately all that had happened, and to hear for themselves what the Long Knives had to say. They gathered to meet him at Cahokia, chiefs and warriors of every grade; among them were Ottawas and Chippewas, Pottawatomies, Sacs, and Foxes, and others belonging to tribes whose very names have perished. The straggling streets of the dismayed little town were thronged with many hundreds of dark-browed, sullen-looking savages, grotesque in look and terrible in possibility. They strutted to and fro in their

dirty finery, or lounged round the houses, inquisitive, importunate, and insolent, hardly concealing a lust for bloodshed and plunder that the slightest mishap was certain to render ungovernable.

Fortunately, Clark knew exactly how to treat them. He thoroughly understood their natures, and was always on his guard, while seemingly perfectly confident; and he combined conciliation with firmness and decision, and above all with prompt rapidity of action.

For the first two or three days no conclusion was reached, though there was plenty of speechmaking. But on the night of the third a party of turbulent warriors[1] endeavored to force their way into the house where he was lodging, and to carry him off. Clark, who, as he records, had been "under some apprehensions among such a number of Devils," was anticipating treachery. His guards were at hand, and promptly seized the savages; while the townspeople took the alarm and were under arms in a couple of minutes, thus convincing the Indians that their friendship for the Americans was not feigned.

Clark instantly ordered the French militia to put the captives, both chiefs and warriors, in irons. He had treated the Indians well, and had not angered them by the harshness and brutality that so often made them side against the English or Americans and in favor of the French; but he knew that any signs of timidity would be fatal. His boldness and decision were crowned with complete success. The crestfallen prisoners humbly protested that they were only trying to find out if the French were really friendly to Clark, and begged that they might be released. He answered with haughty indifference, and refused to release them, even when

[1] "A party of Puans and others."—Clark's letter to Mason.

the chiefs of the other tribes came up to intercede. Indians and whites alike were in the utmost confusion, every man distrusting what the moment might bring forth. Clark continued seemingly wholly unmoved, and did not even shift his lodgings to the fort, remaining in a house in the town, but he took good care to secretly fill a large room adjoining his own with armed men, while the guards were kept ready for instant action. To make his show of indifference complete, he "assembled a Number of Gentlemen and Ladies and danced nearly the whole night." The perplexed savages, on the other hand, spent the hours of darkness in a series of councils among themselves.

Next morning he summoned all the tribes to a grand council, releasing the captive chiefs, that he might speak to them in the presence of their friends and allies. The preliminary ceremonies were carefully executed in accordance with the rigid Indian etiquette. Then Clark stood up in the midst of the rings of squatted warriors, while his riflemen clustered behind him in their tasselled hunting-shirts, travel-torn and weather-beaten. He produced the bloody war-belt of wampum, and handed it to the chiefs whom he had taken captive, telling the assembled tribes that he scorned alike their treachery and their hostility; that he would be thoroughly justified in putting them to death, but that instead he would have them escorted safely from the town, and after three days would begin war upon them. He warned them that if they did not wish their own women and children massacred, they must stop killing those of the Americans. Pointing to the war-belt, he challenged them, on behalf of his people, to see which would make it the most bloody; and he finished by telling them that while they stayed in his camp they should be given food

and strong drink,[1] and that now he had ended his talk to them, and he wished them to speedily depart.

Not only the prisoners, but all the other chiefs in turn forthwith rose, and in language of dignified submission protested their regret at having been led astray by the British, and their determination thenceforth to be friendly with the Americans.

In response, Clark again told them that he came not as a counsellor but as a warrior, not begging for a truce but carrying in his right hand peace and in his left hand war; save only that to a few of their worst men he intended to grant no terms whatever. To those who were friendly he, too, would be a friend, but if they chose war, he would call from the Thirteen Council-Fires[2] warriors so numerous that they would darken the land, and from that time on the red people would hear no sound but that of the birds that lived on blood. He went on to tell them that there had been a mist before their eyes, but that he would clear away the cloud and would show them the right of the quarrel between the Long Knives and the king who dwelt across the great sea; and then he told them about the revolt in terms which would almost have applied to a rising of Hurons

[1] "Provisions and Rum."—Letter to Mason. This is much the best authority for these proceedings. The "Memoir," written by an old man who had squandered his energies and sunk into deserved obscurity, is tedious and magniloquent, and sometimes inaccurate. Moreover, Dillon has not always chosen the extracts judiciously. Clark's decidedly prolix speeches to the Indians are given with intolerable repetition. They were well suited to the savages, drawing the causes of the quarrel between the British and Americans in phrases that could be understood by the Indian mind; but their inflated hyperbole is not now interesting. They describe the Americans as lighting a great council-fire, sharpening tomahawks, striking the war-post, declining to give "two bucks for a blanket," as the British wanted them to, etc.; with incessant allusions to the Great Spirit being angry, the roads being made smooth, refusing to listen to the bad birds who flew through the woods, and the like. Occasional passages are fine; but it all belongs to the study of Indians and Indian oratory, rather than to the history of the Americans.

[2] In his speeches, as in those of his successors in treaty-making, the United States were sometimes spoken of as the Thirteen Fires, and sometimes as the Great Fire.

or Wyandots against the Iroquois. At the end of his speech he offered them the two belts of peace and war.

They eagerly took the peace-belt, but he declined to smoke the calumet, and told them he would not enter into the solemn ceremonies of the peace treaty with them until the following day. He likewise declined to release all his prisoners, and insisted that two of them should be put to death. They even yielded to this, and surrendered to him two young men, who advanced and sat down before him on the floor, covering their heads with their blankets, to receive the tomahawk.[1] Then he granted them full peace and forgave the young men their doom, and the next day, after the peace council, there was a feast, and the friendship of the Indians was won. Clark ever after had great influence over them; they admired his personal prowess, his oratory, his address as a treaty-maker, and the skill with which he led his troops. Long afterward, when the United States authorities were endeavoring to make treaties with the red men, it was noticed that the latter would never speak to any other white general or commissioner while Clark was present.

After this treaty there was peace in the Illinois country; the Indians remained for some time friendly, and the French were kept well satisfied.

[1] I have followed the contemporary letter to Mason rather than the more elaborate and slightly different account of the "Memoir." The account written by Clark in his old age, like Shelby's similar autobiography, is, in many respects, not very trustworthy. It cannot be accepted for a moment where it conflicts with any contemporary accounts.

NOTE

(The following account of the first negotiations of the Americans with the Indians near Vincennes is curious as being the report of one of the Indians; but it was evidently colored to suit his hearer, for as a matter of fact the Indians of the Wabash were for the time being awed into quiet, the Piankeshaws sided with the Americans, and none of them dared rise until the British approached.)

(Haldimand MSS., Series B, vol. CXXII, p. 219.)

PROCEEDINGS of the Rebels at St. Vincennes as related to Lieut. Govr. Hamilton by Neegik an Ottawa War Chief sent forward to gain intelligence. Camp at Rocher de Bout 14th Octr. 1778—

On the Rebels first arrival at St. Vincennes they took down the English Flag left there by Lieut. Gen. Abbott, wrapped a large stone in it, and threw it into the Ouabash, saying to the Indians, thus we mean to treat your Father—

Having called the Indians together they laid a War Belt colored red, & a belt colored green before them, telling them that if they delighted in mischief and had no compassion on their wives & children they might take up the red one, if on the contrary they were wise & preferred peace, the green one—

The old Tobacco a chief of the [Piankeshaws] spoke as follows— My brothers—you speak in a manner not to be understood, I never yet saw, nor have I heard from my ancestors that it was customary to place good & bad things in the same dish—You talk to us as if you meant us well, yet you speak of War & peace in the same minute, thus I treat the speeches of such men—on which with a violent kick he spurned their belts from him.

The son of Lagesse, a young Chief of the Pontconattamis of St. Joseph spoke next to them.

My brothers—'Tis because I have listened to the voice of our old men, & because I have regard to our women & children that I have not before now struck my Tomahawk into some of your heads—attend to what I say, I will only go to see in what condition our wives & children are [meaning, I will first place them in security] and then you may depend on seeing me again—

The Rebel speaker then said—

You are young men & your youth excuses your ignorances, you would not else talk as you do—Our design is to march thro' your country, & if we find any fires in our way, we shall just tread them out as we walk along & if we meet with any obstacle or barrier we shall remove it with all ease, but the bystanders must take care lest the splinters should scar their faces.

We shall then proceed to Detroit where your father is whom we consider as a Hog put to fatten in a penn, we shall enclose him in his penn, till he be fat, & then we will throw him into the river—We shall draw a reinforcement from the Falls on the Ohio & from thence & the Illinois send six hundred men to Chicagou—

To this the Indians replied—You that are so brave, what need have you to be reinforced, go to Detroit, you that can put out our fires & so easyly remove our barriers.—This we say to you, take care that in attempting to extinguish our fires you do not burn yourselves, & that in breaking down our barriers you do not run splinters into your hands. You may also expect that we shall not suffer a single Frenchman to accompany you to Detroit.

End of the Conference.

CHAPTER XV

CLARK'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST VINCENNES

1779

Hamilton, at Detroit, had been so encouraged by the successes of his war-parties that, in 1778, he began to plan an attack on Fort Pitt;[1] but his plans were forestalled by Clark's movements, and he, of course, abandoned them when the astounding news reached him that the rebels had themselves invaded the Illinois country, captured the British commandant, Rocheblave, and administered to the inhabitants the oath of allegiance to Congress.[2] Shortly afterward, he learned that Vincennes likewise was in the hands of the Americans.

He was a man of great energy, and he immediately began to prepare an expedition for the reconquest of the country. French emissaries who were loyal to the British Crown were sent to the Wabash to stir up the Indians against the Americans; and though the Piankeshaws remained friendly to the latter, the Kickapoos and Weas, who were more powerful, announced their readiness to espouse the British cause if they received support, while the neighboring Miamis were already on the war-path. The commandants at the small posts of Mackinaw and St. Josephs were also notified to incite the Lake Indians to harass the Illinois country.[3]

He led the main body in person, and throughout September every soul in Detroit was busy from morning

[1] Haldimand MSS. Hamilton to Carleton, January, 1778.
[2] *Ibid.* Hamilton's letter of August 8th.
[3] *Ibid.* Hamilton to Haldimand, September 17, 1778.

till night in mending boats, baking biscuit, packing provisions in kegs and bags, preparing artillery stores, and in every way making ready for the expedition. Fifteen large bateaux and pirogues were procured, each capable of carrying from eighteen hundred to three thousand pounds; these were to carry the ammunition, food, clothing, tents, and especially the presents for the Indians. Cattle and wheels were sent ahead to the most important portages on the route that would be traversed; a six-pounder gun was also forwarded. Hamilton had been deeply exasperated by what he regarded as the treachery of most of the Illinois and Wabash creoles in joining the Americans; but he was in high spirits and very confident of success. He wrote to his superior officer that the British were sure to succeed if they acted promptly, for the Indians were favorable to them, knowing they alone could give them supplies; and he added "the Spaniards are feeble and hated by the French, the French are fickle and have no man of capacity to advise or lead them, and the Rebels are enterprising and brave, but want resources." The bulk of the Detroit French, including all their leaders, remained stanch supporters of the Crown, and the militia eagerly volunteered to go on the expedition. Feasts were held with the Ottawas, Chippewas, and Pottawatomies, at which oxen were roasted whole, while Hamilton and the chiefs of the French rangers sang the war-song in solemn council, and received pledges of armed assistance and support from the savages.[1]

On October 7th, the expedition left Detroit; before starting the venerable Jesuit missionary gave the Catholic French who went along his solemn blessing and ap-

[1] *Ibid.* Hamilton to Haldimand, September 23, October 3, 1778.

proval, conditionally upon their strictly keeping the oath they had taken to be loyal and obedient servants of the Crown.[1] It is worthy of note that, while the priest at Kaskaskia proved so potent an ally of the Americans, the priest at Detroit was one of the stanchest supporters of the British. Hamilton started with thirty-six British regulars, under two lieutenants, forty-five Detroit volunteers (chiefly French), who had been carefully drilled for over a year, under Captain Lamothe; seventy-nine Detroit militia, under a major and two captains; and seventeen members of the Indian Department (including three captains and four lieutenants) who acted with the Indians. There were thus in all one hundred and seventy-seven whites.[2] Sixty Indians started with the troops from Detroit, but so many bands joined him on the route that when he reached Vincennes his entire force amounted to five hundred men.[3]

Having embarked, the troops and Indians paddled downstream to Lake Erie, reaching it in a snow-storm, and when a lull came they struck boldly across the lake, making what bateau-men call a "traverse" of thirty-six miles to the mouth of the Maumee. Darkness overtook them while still on the lake, and the head boats hung out lights for the guidance of those astern; but about midnight a gale came up, and the whole flotilla

[1] Haldimand MSS., Series B, vol. CXXIII, p. 53. Hamilton's letter of July 6, 1781, containing a "brief account" of the whole expedition, taken from what he calls a "diary of transactions" that he had preserved.

[2] *Ibid.*, Series B, vol. CXXII, p. 253, return of forces on December 24th.

[3] *Ibid.* Hamilton's letter of July 6, 1781, the "brief account." Clark's estimate was very close to the truth; he gave Hamilton six hundred men, four hundred of them Indians. See State Department MSS., No. 71, vol. I, p. 247. Papers Continental Congress. Letter of G. R. Clark to Governor Henry, April 29, 1779. This letter was written seven months before that to Mason, and many years before the "Memoir," so I have, where possible, followed it as being better authority than either.

was nearly swamped, being beached with great difficulty on an oozy flat close to the mouth of the Maumee. The waters of the Maumee were low, and the boats were poled slowly up against the current, reaching the portage point, where there was a large Indian village, on the 24th of the month. Here a nine miles' carry was made to one of the sources of the Wabash, called by the *voyageurs* "*la petite rivière.*" This stream was so low that the boats could not have gone down it had it not been for a beaver dam four miles below the landing-place, which backed up the current. An opening was made in the dam to let the boats pass. The traders and Indians thoroughly appreciated the help given them at this difficult part of the course by the engineering skill of the beavers—for Hamilton was following the regular route of the hunting, trading, and war parties—and none of the beavers of this particular dam were ever molested, being left to keep their dam in order, and repair it, which they always speedily did whenever it was damaged.[1]

It proved as difficult to go down the Wabash as to get up the Maumee. The water was shallow, and once or twice in great swamps dikes had to be built that the boats might be floated across. Frost set in heavily, and the ice cut the men as they worked in the water to haul the boats over shoals or rocks. The bateaux often needed to be beached and calked, while both whites and Indians had to help carry the loads round the shoal places. At every Indian village it was necessary to stop, hold a conference, and give presents. At last the Wea village—or Ouiatanon, as Hamilton called it—was reached. Here the Wabash chiefs, who had made peace with the Americans, promptly came in and tendered their allegiance to the British, and a reconnoitring party

[1] Haldimand MSS. Hamilton's "brief account."

seized a lieutenant and three men of the Vincennes militia, who were themselves on a scouting expedition, but who nevertheless were surprised and captured without difficulty.[1] They had been sent out by Captain Leonard Helm, then acting as commandant at Vincennes. He had but a couple of Americans with him, and was forced to trust to the creole militia, who had all embodied themselves with great eagerness, having taken the oath of allegiance to Congress. Having heard rumors of the British advance, he had despatched a little party to keep watch, and in consequence of their capture he was taken by surprise.

From Ouiatanon Hamilton despatched Indian parties to surround Vincennes and intercept any messages sent either to the Falls or to the Illinois; they were completely successful, capturing a messenger who carried a hurried note written by Helm to Clark to announce what had happened. An advance-guard, under Major Hay, was sent forward to take possession, but Helm showed so good a front that nothing was attempted until the next day, the 17th of December, just seventy-one days after the expedition had left Detroit, when Hamilton came up at the head of his whole force and entered Vincennes. Poor Helm was promptly deserted by all the creole militia. The latter had been loud in their boasts until the enemy came in view, but as soon as they caught sight of the redcoats they began to slip away and run up to the British to surrender their arms.[2] He was finally left with only one or two men, Americans. Nevertheless, he refused the first summons to surrender; but Hamilton, who knew that Helm's troops had de-

[1] *Ibid.* The French officer had in his pocket one British and one American commission; Hamilton debated in his mind for some time the advisability of hanging him.

[2] *Ibid.* Intercepted letter of Captain Helm, Series B, vol. CXXII, p. 280.

serted him, marched up to the fort at the head of his soldiers, and the American was obliged to surrender, with no terms granted save that he and his associates should be treated with humanity.[1] The instant the fort was surrendered the Indians broke in and plundered it; but they committed no act of cruelty, and only plundered a single private house.

The French inhabitants had shown pretty clearly that they did not take a keen interest in the struggle, on either side. They were now summoned to the church and offered the chance—which they for the most part eagerly embraced—of purging themselves of their past misconduct by taking a most humiliating oath of repentance, acknowledging that they had sinned against God and man by siding with the rebels, and promising to be loyal in the future. Two hundred and fifty of the militia, being given back their arms, appeared with their officers, and took service again under the British king, swearing a solemn oath of allegiance. They certainly showed throughout the most light-hearted indifference to chronic perjury and treachery; nor did they in other respects appear to very good advantage. Clark was not in the least surprised at the news of their conduct; for he had all along realized that the attachment of the French would prove but a slender reed on which to lean in the moment of trial.

[1] *Ibid.* Letter of Hamilton, Dec. 18–30, 1778. The story of Helm's marching out with the honors of war is apparently a mere invention. Even Mann Butler, usually so careful, permits himself to be led off into all sorts of errors when describing the incidents of the Illinois and Vincennes expeditions, and the writers who have followed him have generally been less accurate. The story of Helm drinking toddy by the fireplace when Clark retook the fort, and of the latter ordering riflemen to fire at the chimney, so as to knock the mortar into the toddy, may safely be set down as pure—and very weak—fiction. When Clark wrote his memoirs, in his old age, he took delight in writing down among his exploits all sorts of childish stratagems; the marvel is that any sane historian should not have seen that these were on their face as untrue as they were ridiculous.

Hamilton had no fear of the inhabitants themselves, for the fort completely commanded the town. To keep them in good order he confiscated all their spirituous liquors, and in a rather amusing burst of Puritan feeling destroyed two billiard-tables, which he announced were "sources of immorality and dissipation in such a settlement." [1] He had no idea that he was in danger of attack from without, for his spies brought him word that Clark had only a hundred and ten men in the Illinois country;[2] and the route between was in winter one of extraordinary difficulty.

He had five hundred men and Clark but little over one hundred. He was not only far nearer his base of supplies and reinforcements at Detroit than Clark was to his at Fort Pitt, but he was also actually across Clark's line of communications. Had he pushed forward at once to attack the Americans, and had he been able to overcome the difficulties of the march, he would almost certainly have conquered. But he was daunted by the immense risk and danger of the movement. The way was long and the country flooded, and he feared the journey might occupy so much time that his stock of provisions would be exhausted before he got halfway. In such a case the party might starve to death or perish from exposure. Besides, he did not know what he should do for carriages; and he dreaded the rigor of the winter weather.[3] There were undoubtedly appalling difficulties in the way of a midwinter march and attack; and the fact that Clark attempted and performed the feat which Hamilton dared not try, marks just the difference between a man of genius and a good, brave, ordinary commander.

[1] *Ibid.* [2] *Ibid.* "Fourscore at Kaskaskia and thirty at Cahokia."
[3] *Ibid.* In his various letters Hamilton sets forth the difficulties at length.

Having decided to suspend active operations during the cold weather, he allowed the Indians to scatter back to their villages for the winter, and sent most of the Detroit militia home, retaining in garrison only thirty-four British regulars, forty French volunteers, and a dozen white leaders of the Indians;[1] in all, eighty or ninety whites, and a probably larger number of red auxiliaries. The latter were continually kept out on scouting expeditions; Miamis and Shawnees were sent down to watch the Ohio, and take scalps in the settlements, while bands of Kickapoos, the most warlike of the Wabash Indians, and of Ottawas, often accompanied by French partisans, went toward the Illinois country.[2] Hamilton intended to undertake a formidable campaign in the spring. He had sent messages to Stuart, the British Indian agent in the south, directing him to give war-belts to the Chickasaws, Cherokees, and Creeks, that a combined attack on the frontier might take place as soon as the weather opened. He himself was to be joined by reinforcements from Detroit, while the Indians were to gather round him as soon as the winter broke. He would then have had probably over a thousand men, and light cannon with which to batter down the stockades. He rightly judged that with this force he could not only reconquer the Illinois, but also sweep Kentucky, where the outnumbered riflemen could not have met him in the field, nor the wooden forts have withstood his artillery. Undoubtedly he would have carried out his plan, and have destroyed all the settlements west of the Alleghanies, had he been allowed to wait until the mild weather

[1] *Ibid.* Series B, vol. CXXII, p. 287. Return of Vincennes garrison for January 30, 1779.

[2] *Ibid.* Hamilton's "brief account," and his letter of December 18th.

brought him his hosts of Indian allies and his reinforcements of regulars and militia from Detroit.

But in Clark he had an antagonist whose far-sighted daring and indomitable energy raised him head and shoulders above every other frontier leader. This backwoods colonel was perhaps the one man able in such a crisis to keep the land his people had gained. When the news of the loss of Vincennes reached the Illinois towns, and especially when there followed a rumor that Hamilton himself was on his march thither to attack them,[1] the panic became tremendous among the French. They frankly announced that though they much preferred the Americans, yet it would be folly to oppose armed resistance to the British; and one or two of their number were found to be in communication with Hamilton and the Detroit authorities. Clark promptly made ready for resistance, tearing down the buildings near the fort at Kaskaskia—his headquarters —and sending out scouts and runners; but he knew that it was hopeless to try to withstand such a force as Hamilton could gather. He narrowly escaped being taken prisoner by a party of Ottawas and Canadians, who had come from Vincennes early in January, when the weather was severe and the travelling fairly good.[2] He was at the time on his way to Cahokia, to arrange for the defense; several of the wealthier Frenchmen were with him in "chairs"—presumably creaking wooden carts—and one of them "swampt," or mired down, only a hundred yards from the ambush. Clark and his guards were so on the alert that no attack was made.

In the midst of his doubt and uncertainty he received

[1] The rumor came when Clark was attending a dance given by the people of the little village of La Prairie du Rocher. The creoles were passionately fond of dancing, and the Kentuckians entered into the amusement with the utmost zest.

[2] Haldimand MSS. Hamilton's letter, January 24, 1779.

some news that enabled him immediately to decide on the proper course to follow. He had secured great influence over the bolder, and therefore the leading, spirits among the French. One of these was a certain Francis Vigo, a trader in St. Louis. He was by birth an Italian, who had come to New Orleans in a Spanish regiment, and having procured his discharge, had drifted to the creole villages of the frontier, being fascinated by the profitable adventures of the Indian trade. Journeying to Vincennes, he was thrown into prison by Hamilton; on being released, he returned to St. Louis. Thence he instantly crossed over to Kaskaskia, on January 27, 1779,[1] and told Clark that Hamilton had at the time only eighty men in garrison, with three pieces of cannon and some swivels mounted, but that as soon as the winter broke, he intended to gather a very large force and take the offensive.[2]

Clark instantly decided to forestall his foe, and to make the attack himself, heedless of the almost impassable nature of the ground and of the icy severity of the weather. Not only had he received no reinforcements from Virginia but he had not had so much as a "scrip of a pen" from Governor Henry since he had left him, nearly twelve months before.[3] So he was forced to trust entirely to his own energy and power. He first equipped a row-galley with two four-pounders and four swivels, and sent her off with a crew of forty men, having named her the *Willing*.[4] She was to patrol the Ohio, and then to station herself in the Wabash so as to stop all boats from descending it. She was the first gunboat ever afloat on the Western waters.

[1] State Department MSS. Letters to Washington, vol. XXXIII, p. 90.
[2] *Ibid.* Papers of Continental Congress, No. 71, vol. I, p. 267. [3] *Ibid.*
[4] Under the command of Clark's cousin, Lieutenant John Rogers.

Then he hastily drew together his little garrisons of backwoodsmen from the French towns, and prepared for the march overland against Vincennes. His bold front and confident bearing, and the prompt decision of his measures, had once more restored confidence among the French, whose spirits rose as readily as they were cast down; and he was especially helped by the creole girls, whose enthusiasm for the expedition roused many of the more daring young men to volunteer under Clark's banner. By these means he gathered together a band of one hundred and seventy men, at whose head he marched out of Kaskaskia on the 7th of February.[1] All the inhabitants escorted them out of the village, and the Jesuit priest, Gibault, gave them absolution at parting.

The route by which they had to go was two hundred and forty miles in length. It lay through a beautiful and well-watered country of groves and prairies; but at that season the march was necessarily attended with the utmost degree of hardship and fatigue. The weather had grown mild, so that there was no suffering from cold; but in the thaw the ice on the rivers melted, great freshets followed, and all the lowlands and meadows were flooded. Clark's great object was to keep his troops in good spirits. Of course, he and the other officers shared every hardship and led in every labor. He encouraged the men to hunt game; and to "feast on it like Indian war-dancers," [2] each company in turn inviting the others to the smoking and plentiful banquets. One day they saw great herds of buffaloes and killed many of them. They had no tents;[3] but at nightfall

[1] Letter to Henry. The letter to Mason says it was the 5th.

[2] Clark's "Memoir."

[3] State Department MSS. Letters to Washington, vol. XXXIII, p. 90. "A Journal of Col. G. R. Clark. Proceedings from the 29th Jan'y 1779 to the 26th

they kindled huge camp-fires, and spent the evenings merrily round the piles of blazing logs, in hunter fashion, feasting on bear's ham and buffalo hump, elk saddle, venison haunch and the breast of the wild turkey, some singing of love and the chase and war, and others dancing, after the manner of the French trappers and wood-runners.

Thus they kept on, marching hard but gleefully and in good spirits until, after a week, they came to the drowned lands of the Wabash. They first struck the two branches of the Little Wabash. Their channels were a league apart, but the flood was so high that they now made one great river five miles in width, the overflow of water being three feet deep in the shallowest part of the plains between and alongside them.

Clark instantly started to build a pirogue; then crossing over the first channel he put up a scaffold on the edge of the flooded plain. He ferried his men over, and brought the baggage across and placed it on the scaffold; then he swam the pack-horses over, loaded them as they stood belly-deep in the water beside the scaffold, and marched his men on through the water until they came to the second channel, which was crossed as the

March Inst." [by Captain Bowman]. This journal has been known for a long time. The original is supposed to have been lost; but either this is it or else it is a contemporary MS. copy. In the "Campaign in the Illinois" (Cincinnati, Robert Clarke & Co., 1869), p. 99, there is a printed copy of the original. The Washington MS. differs from it in one or two particulars. Thus, the printed diary in the "Campaign," on p. 99, line 3, says "fifty volunteers"; the MS. copy says "50 French volunteers." Line 5 in the printed copy says "and such other Americans"; in the MS. it says "and several other Americans." Lines 6 and 7 of the printed copy read as follows in the MS. (but only make doubtful sense): "These with a number of horses designed for the settlement of Kantuck &c. Jan. 30th, on which Col. Clark," etc. Lines 10 and 11 of the printed copy read in the MS.: "was let alone till spring that he with his Indians would undoubtedly cut us all off." Lines 13 and 14 of the printed copy read in the MS.: "Jan. 31st, sent an express to Cahokia for volunteers. Nothing extraordinary this day."

first had been. The building of the pirogue and the ferrying took three days in all.

They had by this time come so near Vincennes that they dared not fire a gun for fear of being discovered; besides, the floods had driven the game all away; so that they soon began to feel hunger, while their progress was very slow, and they suffered much from the fatigue of travelling all day long through deep mud or breast-high water. On the 17th they reached the Embarras River, but could not cross, nor could they find a dry spot on which to camp; at last they found the water falling off a small, almost submerged hillock, and on this they huddled through the night. At daybreak they heard Hamilton's morning gun from the fort, that was but three leagues distant; and as they could not find a ford across the Embarras, they followed it down and camped by the Wabash. There Clark set his drenched, hungry, and dispirited followers to building some pirogues; while two or three unsuccessful attempts were made to get men across the river that they might steal boats. He determined to leave his horses at this camp; for it was almost impossible to get them farther.[1]

On the morning of the 20th the men had been without food for nearly two days. Many of the creole volunteers began to despair, and talked of returning. Clark knew that his Americans, veterans who had been with him for over a year, had no idea of abandoning the enterprise, nor yet of suffering the last extremities of hunger while they had horses along. He paid no heed to the request of the creoles, nor did he even forbid their going back; he only laughed at them, and told them to go out

[1] This is not exactly stated in the "Memoir"; but it speaks of the horses as being with the troops on the 20th; and after they left camp, on the evening of the 21st, states that he "would have given a good deal . . . for one of the horses."

and try to kill a deer. He knew that without any violence he could yet easily detain the volunteers for a few days longer; and he kept up the spirits of the whole command by his undaunted and confident mien. The canoes were nearly finished; and about noon a small boat with five Frenchmen from Vincennes was captured. From these Clark gleaned the welcome intelligence that the condition of affairs was unchanged at the fort, and that there was no suspicion of any impending danger. In the evening the men were put in still better heart by one of the hunters killing a deer.

It rained all the next day. By dawn Clark began to ferry the troops over the Wabash in the canoes he had built, and they were soon on the eastern bank of the river, the side on which Vincennes stood. They now hoped to get to town by nightfall; but there was no dry land for leagues roundabout, save where a few hillocks rose island-like above the flood. The Frenchmen whom they had captured said they could not possibly get along; but Clark led the men in person, and they waded with infinite toil for about three miles, the water often up to their chins; and they then camped on a hillock for the night. Clark kept the troops cheered up by every possible means, and records that he was much assisted by "a little antic drummer," a young boy who did good service by making the men laugh with his pranks and jokes.[1]

Next morning they resumed their march, the strong-

[1] Law, in his "Vincennes" (p. 32), makes the deeds of the drummer the basis for a traditional story that is somewhat too highly colored. Thus he makes Clark's men at one time mutiny, and refuse to go forward. This they never did; the creoles once got dejected and wished to return, but the Americans, by Clark's own statement, never faltered at all. Law's "Vincennes" is an excellent little book, but he puts altogether too much confidence in mere tradition. For another instance beside this, see page 68, where he describes Clark as entrapping and killing "upwards of fifty Indians," instead of only eight or nine, as was actually the case.

est wading painfully through the water, while the weak and famished were carried in the canoes, which were so hampered by the bushes that they could hardly go even as fast as the toiling footmen. The evening and morning guns of the fort were heard plainly by the men as they plodded onward, numbed and weary. Clark, as usual, led them in person. Once they came to a place so deep that there seemed no crossing, for the canoes could find no ford. It was hopeless to go back or stay still, and the men huddled together, apparently about to despair. But Clark suddenly blackened his face with gunpowder, gave the war-whoop, and sprang forward boldly into the ice-cold water, wading out straight toward the point at which they were aiming; and the men followed him, one after another, without a word. Then he ordered those nearest him to begin one of their favorite songs; and soon the whole line took it up, and marched cheerfully onward. He intended to have the canoes ferry them over the deepest part, but before they came to it one of the men felt that his feet were in a path, and by carefully following it they got to a sugar-camp, a hillock covered with maples, which once had been tapped for sugar. Here they camped for the night, still six miles from the town, without food, and drenched through. The prisoners from Vincennes, sullen and weary, insisted that they could not possibly get to the town through the deep water; the prospect seemed almost hopeless even to the iron-willed, steel-sinewed backwoodsmen;[1] but their leader never lost courage for a moment.

That night was bitterly cold, for there was a heavy frost, and the ice formed half an inch thick round the edges and in the smooth water. But the sun rose bright

[1] Bowman ends his entry for the day with: "No provisions yet. Lord help us!"

and glorious, and Clark, in burning words, told his stiffened, famished, half-frozen followers that the evening would surely see them at the goal of their hopes. Without waiting for an answer, he plunged into the water, and they followed him with a cheer, in Indian file. Before the third man had entered the water he halted and told one of his officers[1] to close the rear with twenty-five men, and to put to death any man who refused to march; and the whole line cheered him again.

Then came the most trying time of the whole march. Before them lay a broad sheet of water, covering what was known as the Horse Shoe Plain; the floods had made it a shallow lake four miles across, unbroken by so much as a hand's breadth of dry land. On its farther side was a dense wood. Clark led breast-high in the water with fifteen or twenty of the strongest men next him. About the middle of the plain the cold and exhaustion told so on the weaker men that the canoes had to take them aboard and carry them on to the land; and from that time on the little dugouts plied frantically to and fro to save the more helpless from drowning. Those who, though weak, could still move onward, clung to the stronger, and struggled ahead, Clark animating them in every possible way. When they at last reached the woods the water became so deep that it was to the shoulders of the tallest, but the weak and those of low stature could now cling to the bushes and old logs, until the canoes were able to ferry them to a spot of dry land, some ten acres in extent, that lay near by. The strong and tall got ashore and built fires. Many on reaching the shore fell flat on their faces, half in the water, and could not move farther. It was found that the fires did not help the very weak, so every such a one was put

[1] Bowman.

between two strong men who ran him up and down by the arms, and thus soon made him recover.[1]

Fortunately, at this time an Indian canoe, paddled by some squaws, was discovered and overtaken by one of the dugouts. In it was half a quarter of a buffalo, with some corn, tallow, and kettles. This was an invaluable prize. Broth was immediately made, and was served out to the most weakly with great care; almost all of the men got some, but very many gave their shares to the weakly, rallying and joking them to put them in good heart. The little refreshment, together with the fires and the bright weather, gave new life to all. They set out again in the afternoon, crossed a deep, narrow lake in their canoes, and after marching a short distance came to a copse of timber from which they saw the fort and town not two miles away. Here they halted, and looked to their rifles and ammunition, making ready for the fight. Every man now feasted his eyes with the sight of what he had so long labored to reach, and forthwith forgot that he had suffered anything; making light of what had been gone through, and passing from dogged despair to the most exultant self-confidence.

Between the party and the town lay a plain, the hollows being filled with little pools, on which were many water-fowl, and some of the townspeople were in sight, on horseback, shooting ducks. Clark sent out a few active young creoles, who succeeded in taking prisoner one of these fowling horsemen. From him it was learned that neither Hamilton nor any one else had the least suspicion that any attack could possibly be made at that season, but that a couple of hundred Indian warriors had just come to town.

[1] Clark's "Memoir."

Clark was rather annoyed at the last bit of information. The number of armed men in town, including British, French, and Indians about quadrupled his own force. This made heavy odds to face, even with the advantage of a surprise, and in spite of the fact that his own men were sure to fight to the last, since failure meant death by torture. Moreover, if he made the attack without warning, some of the Indians and Vincennes people would certainly be slain, and the rest would be thereby made his bitter enemies, even if he succeeded. On the other hand, he found out from the prisoner that the French were very lukewarm to the British, and would certainly not fight if they could avoid it; and that half of the Indians were ready to side with the Americans. Finally, there was a good chance that before dark some one would discover the approach of the troops and would warn the British, thereby doing away with all chance of a surprise.

After thinking it over Clark decided, as the less of two evils, to follow the hazardous course of himself announcing his approach. He trusted that the boldness of such a course, together with the shock of his utterly unexpected appearance, would paralyze his opponents and incline the wavering to favor him. So he released the prisoner and sent him in ahead, with a letter to the people of Vincennes. By this letter he proclaimed to the French that he was at that moment about to attack the town; that those townspeople who were friends to the Americans were to remain in their houses, where they would not be molested; that the friends of the king should repair to the fort, join the "hair-buyer general," and fight like men; and that those who did neither of these two things, but remained armed and in the streets, must expect to be treated as enemies.[1]

[1] Clark's "Memoir."

Having sent the messenger in advance, he waited until his men were rested and their rifles and powder dry, and then at sundown marched straight against the town. He divided his force into two divisions, leading in person the first, which consisted of two companies of Americans and of the Kaskaskia creoles; while the second, led by Bowman, contained Bowman's own company and the Cahokians. His final orders to the men were to march with the greatest regularity, to obey the orders of their officers, and, above all, to keep perfect silence.[1] The rapidly gathering dusk prevented any discovery of his real numbers.

In sending in the messenger he had builded even better than he knew; luck which had long been against him now at last favored him. Hamilton's runners had seen Clark's camp-fires the night before; and a small

[1] In the Haldimand MSS., Series B, vol. CXXII, p. 289, there is a long extract from what is called "Col. Clark's Journal." This is the official report which he speaks of as being carried by William Moires, his express, who was taken by the Indians (see his letter to Henry of April 29th; there seems, by the way, to be some doubt whether this letter was not written to Jefferson; there is a copy in the Jefferson MSS., Series I, vol. I). This is not only the official report, but also the earliest letter Clark wrote on the subject, and therefore the most authoritative. The paragraph relating to the final march against Vincennes is as follows:

"I order'd the march in the first division Capt. Williams, Capt. Worthingtons Company & the Cascaskia Volunteers, in the 2d commanded by Capt. Bowman his own Company & the Cohos Volunteers. At sun down I put the divisions in motion to march in the greatest order & regularity & observe the orders of their officers. Above all to be silent—the 5 men we took in the canoes were our guides. We entered the town on the upper part leaving detached Lt. Bayley & 15 rifle men to attack the Fort & keep up a fire to harrass them until we took possession of the town & they were to remain on that duty till relieved by another party, the two divisions marched into the town & took possession of the main street, put guards &c without the least molestation."

This effectually disposes of the account, which was accepted by Clark himself in his old age, that he ostentatiously paraded his men and marched them to and fro with many flags flying, so as to impress the British with his numbers. Instead of indulging in any such childishness (which would merely have warned the British, and put them on their guard), he in reality made as silent an approach as possible, under cover of the darkness.

Hamilton, in his narrative, speaks of the attack as being made on the 22d of February, not the 23d, as Clark says.

scouting-party of British regulars, Detroit volunteers, and Indians had in consequence been sent to find out what had caused them.[1] These men were not made of such stern stuff as Clark's followers, nor had they such a commander; and after going some miles they were stopped by the floods, and started to return. Before they got back, Vincennes was assailed. Hamilton trusted so completely to the scouting-party, and to the seemingly impassable state of the country, that his watch was very lax. The creoles in the town, when Clark's proclamation was read to them, gathered eagerly to discuss it; but so great was the terror of his name, and so impressed and appalled were they by the mysterious approach of an unknown army, and the confident and menacing language with which its coming was heralded, that none of them dared show themselves partisans of the British by giving warning to the garrison. The Indians likewise heard vague rumors of what had occurred and left the town; a number of the inhabitants who were favorable to the British followed the same course.[2] Hamilton, attracted by the commotion, sent down his soldiers to find out what had happened; but before they succeeded, the Americans were upon them.

About seven o'clock[3] Clark entered the town, and at once pushed his men on to attack the fort. Had he charged he could probably have taken it at once; for so unprepared were the garrison that the first rifle-shots

[1] Hamilton's "brief account" in the Haldimand MSS. The party was led by Lieutenant Schieffelin of the regulars and the French captains Lamothe and Maisonville.

[2] *Ibid.*, Series B, vol. CXXII, p. 337. Account brought to the people of Detroit of the loss of Vincennes, by a Captain Chêne, who was then living in the village. As the Virginians entered it he fled to the woods with some Huron and Ottawa warriors; next day he was joined by some French families and some Miamis and Pottawatomies.

[3] Clark's letter to Henry.

were deemed by them to come from drunken Indians. But of course he had not counted on such a state of things. He had so few men that he dared not run the risk of suffering a heavy loss. Moreover, the backwoodsmen had neither swords nor bayonets.

Most of the creole townspeople received Clark joyfully, and rendered him much assistance, especially by supplying him with powder and ball, his own stock of ammunition being scanty. One of the Indian chiefs[1] offered to bring his tribe to the support of the Americans, but Clark answered that all he asked of the red men was that they should for the moment remain neutral. A few of the young creoles were allowed to join in the attack, however, it being deemed good policy to commit them definitely to the American side.

Fifty of the American troops were detached to guard against any relief from without, while the rest attacked the fort; yet Hamilton's scouting-party crept up, lay hid all night in an old barn, and at daybreak rushed into the fort.[2] Firing was kept up with very little intermission throughout the night. At one o'clock the moon set, and Clark took advantage of the darkness to throw up an intrenchment within rifle-shot of the strongest

[1] A son of the Piankeshaw head chief Tabac.

[2] Hamilton's "Narrative." Clark in his "Memoir" asserts that he designedly let them through, and could have shot them down as they tried to clamber over the stockade if he had wished. Bowman corroborates Hamilton, saying: "We sent a party to intercept them, but missed them. However, we took one of their men, . . . the rest making their escape under the cover of the night into the fort." Bowman's journal is for this siege much more trustworthy than Clark's "Memoir." In the latter, Clark makes not a few direct misstatements, and many details are colored so as to give them an altered aspect. As an instance of the different ways in which he told an event at the time, and thirty years later, take the following accounts of the same incident. The first is from the letter to Henry (State Department MSS.), the second from the "Memoir." 1. "A few days ago I received certain intelligence of Wm. Moires my express to you being killed near the Falls of Ohio, news truly disagreeable to me, as I fear many of my letters will fall into the hands of the enemy at Detroit." 2. "Poor Myres the express, who set out on the 15th, got killed on his passage, and his packet fell into the hands of the enemy;

battery, which consisted of two guns. All of the cannon and swivels in the fort were placed about eleven feet above the ground, on the upper floors of the strong blockhouses that formed the angles of the palisaded walls. At sunrise on the 24th the riflemen from the intrenchment opened a hot fire into the port-holes of the battery, and speedily silenced both guns.[1] The artillery and musketry of the defenders did very little damage to the assailants, who lost but one man wounded, though some of the houses in the town were destroyed by the cannon-balls. In return, the backwoodsmen, by firing into the ports, soon rendered it impossible for the guns to be run out and served, and killed or severely wounded six or eight of the garrison; for the Americans showed themselves much superior, both in marksmanship and in the art of sheltering themselves, to the British regulars and French-Canadians against whom they were pitted.

Early in the forenoon Clark summoned the fort to surrender, and while waiting for the return of the flag his men took the opportunity of getting breakfast, the first regular meal they had had for six days. Hamilton declined to surrender, but proposed a three days' truce instead. This proposition Clark instantly rejected, and the firing again began, the backwoodsmen beseeching

but I had been so much on my guard that there was not a sentence in it that could be of any disadvantage to us for the enemy to know; and there were private letters from soldiers to their friends designedly wrote to deceive in cases of such accidents." His whole account of the night attack and of his treating with Hamilton is bombastic. If his account of the incessant "blaze of fire" of the Americans is true, they must have wasted any amount of ammunition perfectly uselessly. Unfortunately, most of the small Western historians who have written about Clark have really damaged his reputation by the absurd inflation of their language. They were adepts in the forcible-feeble style of writing, a sample of which is their rendering him ludicrous by calling him the "Hannibal of the West" and the "Washington of the West." Moreover, they base his claims to greatness, not on his really great deeds, but on the half-imaginary feats of childish cunning he related in his old age.

[1] Clark's letter to Henry.

Clark to let them storm the fort; he refused. While the negotiations were going on a singular incident occurred. A party of Hamilton's Indians returned from a successful scalping expedition against the frontier, and being ignorant of what had taken place, marched straight into the town. Some of Clark's backwoodsmen instantly fell on them and killed or captured nine, besides two French partisans who had been out with them.[1] One of the latter was the son of a creole lieutenant in Clark's troops, and after much pleading his father and friends procured the release of himself and his comrade.[2] Clark determined to make a signal example of the six captured Indians, both to strike terror into the rest and to show them how powerless the British were to protect them; so he had them led within sight of the fort and there tomahawked and thrown into the river.[3] The sight did not encourage the garrison. The English troops remained firm and eager for the fight, though they had suffered the chief loss; but the Detroit volunteers showed evident signs of panic.

In the afternoon Hamilton sent out another flag, and he and Clark met in the old French church to arrange for the capitulation. Helm, who was still a prisoner on parole, and was told by Clark that he was to remain

[1] *Ibid.* In the letter to Mason he says two scalped, six captured and afterward tomahawked. Bowman says two killed, three wounded, six captured; and calls the two partisans "prisoners." Hamilton and Clark say they were French allies of the British, the former saying there were two, the latter mentioning only one Hamilton says there were fifteen Indians.

[2] The incident is noteworthy as showing how the French were divided; throughout the Revolutionary War in the West they furnished troops to help in turn whites and Indians, British and Americans. The Illinois French, however, generally remained faithful to the Republic, and the Detroit French to the Crown.

[3] Hamilton, who bore the most vindictive hatred to Clark, implies that the latter tomahawked the prisoners himself; but Bowman explicitly says that it was done while Clark and Hamilton were meeting at the church. Be it noticed, in passing, that both Clark and Hamilton agreed that though the Vincennes people favored the Americans, only a very few of them took active part on Clark's side.

such until recaptured, was present; so were the British Major Hay and the American Captain Bowman. There was some bickering and recrimination between the leaders, Clark reproaching Hamilton with having his hands dyed in the blood of the women and children slain by his savage allies; while the former answered that he was not to blame for obeying the orders of his superiors, and that he himself had done all he could to make the savages act mercifully. It was finally agreed that the garrison, seventy-nine men in all,[1] should surrender as prisoners of war. The British commander has left on record his bitter mortification at having to yield the fort "to a set of uncivilized Virginia woodsmen armed with rifles." In truth, it was a most notable achievement. Clark had taken, without artillery, a heavy stockade, protected by cannon and swivels, and garrisoned by trained soldiers. His superiority in numbers was very far from being in itself sufficient to bring about the result, as witness the almost invariable success with which the similar but smaller Kentucky forts, unprovided with artillery and held by fewer men, were defended against much larger forces than Clark's. Much credit belongs to Clark's men, but most belongs to their leader. The boldness of his plan and the resolute skill with which he followed it out, his perseverance through the intense hardships of the midwinter march, the address with which he kept the French and Indians neutral, and the masterful way in which he controlled his own troops, together with the ability and courage he displayed in the actual attack, combined to make his feat the most memorable of all the deeds done west of

[1] Letter to Henry. Hamilton's letter says sixty rank and file of the 8th Regiment and Detroit volunteers; the other nineteen were officers and under-officers, artillerymen, and French partisan leaders. The return of the garrison already quoted shows he had between eighty and ninety white troops.

the Alleghanies in the Revolutionary War.[1] It was likewise the most important in its results, for had he been defeated we would not only have lost the Illinois, but in all probability Kentucky also.

Immediately after taking the fort, Clark sent Helm and fifty men in boats armed with swivels up the Wabash to intercept a party of forty French volunteers from Detroit, who were bringing to Vincennes bateaux heavily laden with goods of all kinds, to the value of ten thousand pounds sterling.[2] In a few days Helm returned successful, and the spoils, together with the goods taken at Vincennes, were distributed among the soldiers, who "got almost rich."[3] The officers kept nothing save a few needed articles of clothing. The gunboat *Willing* appeared shortly after the taking of the fort, the crew bitterly disappointed that they were not in time for the fighting. The long-looked-for messenger from the governor of Virginia also arrived, bearing to the soldiers the warm thanks of the legislature of that State for their capture of Kaskaskia and the promise of more substantial reward.[4]

Clark was forced to parole most of his prisoners, but twenty-seven, including Hamilton himself, were sent to Virginia. The backwoodsmen regarded Hamilton with revengeful hatred, and he was not well treated while

[1] Hamilton himself, at the conclusion of his "brief account," speaks as follows in addressing his superiors: "The difficulties and dangers of Colonel Clark's march from the Illinois were such as required great courage to encounter and great perseverance to overcome. In trusting to traitors he was more fortunate than myself; whether, on the whole, he was entitled to success is not for me to determine." Both Clark and Hamilton give minute accounts of various interviews that took place between them; the accounts do not agree, and it is needless to say that in the narration of each the other appears to disadvantage, being quoted as practically admitting various acts of barbarity, etc.

[2] Letter to Henry.

[3] "Memoir."

[4] One hundred and fifty thousand acres of land opposite Louisville were finally allotted them. Some of the Piankeshaw Indians ceded Clark a tract of land for his own use, but the Virginia legislature very properly disallowed the grant.

among them,[1] save only by Boone—for the kind-hearted, fearless old pioneer never felt anything but pity for a fallen enemy. All the borderers, including Clark,[2] believed that the British commander himself gave rewards to the Indians for the American scalps they brought in; and because of his alleged behavior in this regard he was kept in close confinement by the Virginia government until, through the intercession of Washington, he was at last released and exchanged. Exactly how much he was to blame it is difficult to say. Certainly the blame rests even more with the Crown and the ruling class in Britain, than with Hamilton who merely carried out the orders of his superiors; and though he undoubtedly heartily approved of these orders, and executed them with eager zest, yet it seems that he did what he could—which was very little—to prevent unnecessary atrocities.

The crime consisted in employing the savages at all in a war waged against men, women, and children alike. Undoubtedly the British at Detroit followed the example of the French[3] in paying money to the Indians for the scalps of their foes. It is equally beyond question that the British acted with much more humanity

[1] In Hamilton's "brief account" he says that their lives were often threatened by the borderers, but that "our guard behaved very well, protected us, and hunted for us." At the Falls he found "a number of settlers who lived in log-houses, in eternal apprehension from the Indians," and he adds: "The people at the forts are in a wretched state, obliged to enclose the cattle every night within the fort, and carry their rifles to the field when they go to plough or cut wood." He speaks of Boone's kindness in his short printed narrative in the *Royal Gazette*.

[2] Clark, in his letter to Mason, alludes to Hamilton's known "barbarity"; but in his "Memoir" he speaks very well of Hamilton, and attributes the murderous forays to his subordinates, one of whom, Major Hay, he particularly specifies.

[3] See Parkman's "Montcalm and Wolfe," II, 421, for examples of French payments, some of a peculiarly flagrant sort. A certain kind of American pseudohistorian is especially fond of painting the British as behaving to us with unexampled barbarity; yet nothing is more sure than that the French were far more cruel and less humane in their contests with us than were the British.

than their French predecessors had shown. Apparently the best officers utterly disapproved of the whole business of scalp-buying; but it was eagerly followed by many of the reckless agents and partisan leaders, British, Tories, and Canadians, who themselves often accompanied the Indians against the frontier and witnessed or shared in their unmentionable atrocities. It is impossible to acquit either the British home government or its foremost representatives at Detroit of a large share in the responsibility for the appalling brutality of these men and their red allies; but the heaviest blame rests on the home government.

Clark soon received some small reinforcements, and was able to establish permanent garrisons at Vincennes, Kaskaskia, and Cahokia. With the Indian tribes who lived roundabout he made firm peace; against some hunting bands of Delawares who came in and began to commit ravages he waged ruthless and untiring war, sparing the women and children, but killing all the males capable of bearing arms, and he harried most of them out of the territory, while the rest humbly sued for peace. His own men worshipped him; the French loved and stood in awe of him, while the Indians respected and feared him greatly. During the remainder of the Revolutionary War the British were not able to make any serious effort to shake the hold he had given the Americans on the region lying around and between Vincennes and the Illinois. Moreover, he so effectually pacified the tribes between the Wabash and the Mississippi that they did not become open and formidable foes of the whites until, with the close of the war against Britain, Kentucky passed out of the stage when Indian hostilities threatened her very life.

The fame of Clark's deeds and the terror of his prow-

ess spread to the Southern Indians, and the British at Natchez trembled lest they should share the fate that had come on Kaskaskia and Vincennes.[1] Flatboats from the Illinois went down to New Orleans, and keelboats returned from that city with arms and munitions, or were sent up to Pittsburg;[2] and the following spring Clark built a fort on the east bank of the Mississippi below the Ohio.[3] It was in the Chickasaw territory, and these warlike Indians soon assaulted it, making a determined effort to take it by storm, and though they were repulsed with very heavy slaughter, yet, to purchase their neutrality, the Americans were glad to abandon the fort.

Clark himself, toward the end of 1779, took up his abode at the Falls of the Ohio, where he served in some sort as a shield both for the Illinois and for Kentucky, and from whence he hoped some day to march against Detroit. This was his darling scheme, which he never ceased to cherish. Through no fault of his own, the day never came when he could put it in execution.

He was ultimately made a brigadier-general of the Virginia militia, and to the harassed settlers in Kentucky his mere name was a tower of strength. He was the sole originator of the plan for the conquest of the northwestern lands, and, almost unaided, he had exe-

[1] State Department MSS. ("Intercepted Letters"), No. 51, vol. II, pp. 17 and 45. Letter of James Colbert, a half-breed in the British interest, resident at that time among the Chickasaws, May 25, 1779, etc.

[2] The history of the early navigation of the Ohio and Mississippi begins many years before the birth of any of our Western pioneers, when the French went up and down them. Long before the Revolutionary War occasional hunters, in dugouts, or settlers going to Natchez in flatboats, descended these rivers, and from Pittsburg craft were sent to New Orleans to open negotiations with the Spaniards as soon as hostilities broke out; and ammunition was procured from New Orleans as soon as Independence was declared.

[3] In lat. 36° 30′; it was named Fort Jefferson. Jefferson MSS., 1st Series, vol. XIX. Clark's letter.

cuted his own scheme. For a year he had been wholly cut off from all communication with the home authorities, and had received no help of any kind. Alone, and with the very slenderest means, he had conquered and held a vast and beautiful region, which but for him would have formed part of a foreign and hostile empire;[1] he had clothed and paid his soldiers with the spoils of his enemies; he had spent his own fortune as carelessly as he had risked his life, and the only reward that he was destined for many years to receive was the sword voted him by the legislature of Virginia.[2]

[1] It is of course impossible to prove that but for Clark's conquest the Ohio would have been made our boundary in 1783, exactly as it is impossible to prove that but for Wolfe the English would not have taken Quebec. But when we take into account the determined efforts of Spain and France to confine us to the land east of the Alleghanies, and then to the land southeast of the Ohio, the slavishness of Congress in instructing our commissioners to do whatever France wished, and the readiness shown by one of the commissioners, Franklin, to follow these instructions, it certainly looks as if there would not even have been an effort made by us to get the northwestern territory had we not already possessed it, thanks to Clark. As it was, it was only owing to Jay's broad patriotism and stern determination that our Western boundaries were finally made so far-reaching. None of our early diplomats did as much for the West as Jay, whom at one time the whole West hated and reviled; Mann Butler, whose politics are generally very sound, deserves especial credit for the justice he does the New Yorker.

It is idle to talk of the conquest as being purely a Virginian affair. It was conquered by Clark, a Virginian, with some scant help from Virginia, but it was retained only owing to the power of the United States and the patriotism of such Northern statesmen as Jay, Adams, and Franklin, the negotiators of the final treaty. Had Virginia alone been in interest, Great Britain would not have even paid her claims the compliment of listening to them. Virginia's share in the history of the nation has ever been gallant and leading; but the Revolutionary War was emphatically fought by Americans for America; no part could have won without the help of the whole, and every victory was thus a victory for all, in which all alike can take pride.

[2] A probably truthful tradition reports that when the Virginian commissioners offered Clark the sword, the grim old fighter, smarting under the sense of his wrongs, threw it indignantly from him, telling the envoys that he demanded from Virginia his just rights and the promised reward of his services, not an empty compliment.

CHAPTER XVI

CONTINUANCE OF THE STRUGGLE IN KENTUCKY AND THE NORTHWEST

1779–1781

Clark's successful campaigns against the Illinois towns and Vincennes, besides giving the Americans a foothold north of the Ohio, were of the utmost importance to Kentucky. Until this time, the Kentucky settlers had been literally fighting for life and home, and again and again their strait had been so bad that it seemed—and was—almost an even chance whether they would be driven from the land. The successful outcome of Clark's expedition temporarily overawed the Indians, and, moreover, made the French towns outposts for the protection of the settlers; so that for several years thereafter the tribes west of the Wabash did but little against the Americans. The confidence of the backwoodsmen in their own ultimate triumph was likewise very much increased; while the fame of the Western region was greatly spread abroad. From all these causes it resulted that there was an immediate and great increase of immigration thither, the bulk of the immigrants of course stopping in Kentucky, though a very few, even thus early, went to Illinois. Every settlement in Kentucky was still in jeopardy, and there came moments of dejection, when some of her bravest leaders spoke gloomily of the possibility of the Americans being driven from the land. But these were merely words such as even strong men utter when sore from fresh disaster. After the spring of 1779, there was never any real dan-

ger that the whites would be forced to abandon Kentucky.

The land laws which the Virginia legislature enacted about this time[1] were partly a cause, partly a consequence, of the increased emigration to Kentucky, and of the consequent rise in the value of its wild lands. Long before the Revolution, shrewd and far-seeing speculators had organized land companies to acquire grants of vast stretches of Western territory; but the land only acquired an actual value for private individuals after the incoming of settlers. In addition to the companies, many private individuals had acquired rights to tracts of land; some, under the royal proclamation, giving bounties to the officers and soldiers in the French war; others by actual payment into the public treasury.[2] The Virginia legislature now ratified all titles to regularly surveyed ground claimed under charter, military bounty, and old treasury rights, to the extent of four hundred acres each. Tracts of land were reserved as bounties for the Virginia troops, both Continentals and militia. Each family of actual settlers was allowed a settlement right to four hundred acres for the small sum of nine dollars, and, if very poor, the land was given them on credit. Every such settler also acquired a pre-emptive right to purchase a thousand acres adjoining, at the regulation State price, which was forty pounds, paper money, or forty dollars in specie, for every hundred acres. One peculiar provision was made necessary by the system of settling in

[1] May, 1779; they did not take effect nor was a land court established until the following fall, when the land-office was opened at St. Asaphs, October 13th. Isaac Shelby's claim was the first one considered and granted. He had raised a crop of corn in the country in 1776.

[2] The Ohio Company was the greatest of the companies. There were "also, among private rights, the ancient importation rights, the Henderson Company rights," etc. See Marshall, I, 82.

forted villages. Every such village was allowed six hundred and forty acres, which no outsider could have surveyed or claimed, for it was considered the property of the townsmen, to be held in common until an equitable division could be made; while each family likewise had a settlement right to four hundred acres adjoining the village. The vacant lands were sold, warrants for a hundred acres costing forty dollars in specie; but later on, toward the close of the war, Virginia tried to buoy up her mass of depreciated paper currency by accepting it nearly at par for land-warrants, thereby reducing the cost of these to less than fifty cents for a hundred acres. No warrant applied to a particular spot; it was surveyed on any vacant or presumably vacant ground. Each individual had the surveying done wherever he pleased, the county surveyor usually appointing some skilled woodsman to act as his deputy.

In the end the natural result of all this was to involve half the people of Kentucky in lawsuits over their land, as there were often two or three titles to each patch,[1] and the surveys crossed each other in hopeless tangles. Immediately, the system gave a great stimulus to immigration, for it made it easy for any incoming settler to get title to his farm, and it also strongly attracted all land speculators. Many well-to-do merchants or planters of the seaboard sent agents out to buy lands in Kentucky; and these agents either hired the old pioneers, such as Boone and Kenton, to locate and survey the lands, or else purchased their claims from them outright. The advantages of following the latter plan were of course obvious; for the pioneers were sure to have chosen fertile, well-watered spots; and though they asked more than the State, yet, ready

[1] McAfee MSS.

money was so scarce, and the depreciation of the currency so great, that even thus the land only cost a few cents an acre.[1]

Thus it came about that with the fall of 1779 a strong stream of emigration set toward Kentucky, from the backwoods districts of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina. In company with the real settlers came many land speculators, and also many families of weak, irresolute, or shiftless people, who soon tired of the ceaseless and grinding frontier strife for life, and drifted back to the place whence they had come.[2] Thus there were ever two tides—the larger setting toward Kentucky, the lesser toward the old States; so that the two streams passed each other on the Wilderness Road

[1] From the Clay MSS.: "Virginia, Frederick Co. to wit: This day came William Smith of [illegible] before me John A. Woodcock, a Justice of the peace of the same county, who being of full age deposeth and saith that about the first of June 1780, being in Kentucky and empowered to purchase Land, for Mr. James Ware, he the deponent agreed with a certain Simon Kenton of Kentucky for 1000 Acres of Land about 2 or 3 miles from the big salt spring on Licking, that the sd. Kenton on condition that the sd. Smith would pay him £100 in hand and £100 more when sd. Land was surveyed, . . . sd. Kenton on his part wou'd have the land surveyed and a fee Simple made there to. . . . sd. Land was first rate Land and had a good Spring thereon. . . . he agreed to warrant and defend the same . . . against all persons whatsoever . . . sworn to before me this 17th day of Nov., 1789." Later on, the purchaser, who did not take possession of the land for eight or nine years, feared it would not prove as fertile as Kenton had said, and threatened to sue Kenton; but Kenton, evidently, had the whip-hand in the controversy, for the land, being out in the wilderness, the purchaser did not know its exact location, and when he threatened suit, and asked to be shown it, Kenton "swore that he would not shoe it at all." Letter of James Ware, November 29, 1789.

[2] Thus the increase of population is to be measured by the net gain of immigration over emigration, not by immigration alone. It is probably partly neglect of this fact, and partly simple exaggeration, that make the early statements of the additions to the Kentucky population so very untrustworthy. In 1783, at the end of the Revolution, the population of Kentucky was probably nearer 12,000 than 20,000, and it had grown steadily each year. Yet Butler quotes Floyd as saying that in the spring of 1780, 300 large family boats arrived at the Falls, which would mean an increase of perhaps four or five thousand people; and in the McAfee MSS. occurs the statement that in 1779 and 1780 nearly 20,000 people came to Kentucky. Both of these statements are probably mere estimates, greatly exaggerated; any Westerner of to-day can instance similar reports of movements to Western localities, which under a strict census dwindled wofully.

—for the people who came down the Ohio could not return against the current. Very many who did not return nevertheless found they were not fitted to grapple with the stern trials of existence on the border. Some of these succumbed outright; others unfortunately survived, and clung with feeble and vicious helplessness to the skirts of their manlier fellows; and from them have descended the shiftless squatters, the "mean whites," the listless, uncouth men who half-till their patches of poor soil, and still cumber the earth in out-of-the-way nooks, from the crannies of the Alleghanies to the canyons of the southern Rocky Mountains.

In April, before this great rush of immigration began, but when it was clearly foreseen that it would immediately take place, the county court of Kentucky issued a proclamation to the new settlers, recommending them to keep as united and compact as possible, settling in "stations" or forted towns; and likewise advising each settlement to choose three or more trustees to take charge of their public affairs.[1] Their recommendations and advice were generally followed.

During 1779, the Indian war dragged on much as usual. The only expedition of importance was that undertaken in May by one hundred and sixty Kentuckians, commanded by the county lieutenant, John Bowman,[2] against the Indian town of Chillicothe.

[1] Durrett MSS., in the bound volume of "Papers relating to Louisville and Kentucky." On May 1, 1780, the people living at the Falls, having established a town, forty-six of them signed a petition to have their title made good against Conolly. On February 7, 1781, John Todd and five other trustees of Louisville met; they passed resolutions to erect a grist-mill and make surveys.

[2] MS. "Notes on Kentucky," by George Bradford, who went there in 1779; in the Durrett collection. Haldimand MSS. Letter of Henry Bird, June 9, 1779. As this letter is very important, and gives for the first time the Indian side, I print it in Note A almost in full. The accounts of course conflict somewhat; chiefly as to the number of cabins burnt—from five to forty, and of horses captured—from thirty to three hundred. They agree in all essential points. But as among the

Logan, Harrod, and other famous frontier fighters went along. The town was surprised, several cabins burned, and a number of horses captured. But the Indians rallied, and took refuge in a central blockhouse and a number of strongly built cabins surrounding it, from which they fairly beat off the whites. They then followed to harass the rear of their retreating foes, but were beaten off in turn. Of the whites, nine were killed and two or three wounded; the Indians' loss was two killed and five or six wounded.

The defeat caused intense mortification to the whites; but in reality the expedition was of great service to Kentucky, though the Kentuckians never knew it. The Detroit people had been busily organizing expeditions against Kentucky. Captain Henry Bird had been given charge of one, and he had just collected two hundred Indians at the Mingo town when news of the attack on Chillicothe arrived. Instantly the Indians dissolved in a panic, some returning to defend their towns; others were inclined to beg peace of the Americans. So great was their terror that it was found impossible to persuade them to make any inroad as long as they deemed themselves menaced by a counter-attack of the Kentuckians.[1]

It is true that bands of Mingos, Hurons, Delawares, and Shawnees made occasional successful raids against the frontier, and brought their scalps and prisoners in triumph to Detroit,[2] where they drank such astonishing

whites themselves there is one serious question. Logan's admirers, and most Kentucky historians, hold Bowman responsible for the defeat; but in reality (see Butler, p. 110) there seems strong reason to believe that it was simply due to the unexpectedly strong resistance of the Indians. Bird's letter shows, what the Kentuckians never suspected, that the attack was a great benefit to them in frightening the Indians and stopping a serious inroad. It undoubtedly accomplished more than Clark's attack on Piqua next year, for instance.

[1] Haldimand MSS. De Peyster to Haldimand, November 20, 1779.

[2] *Ibid.* De Peyster to Haldimand, October 20, 1779.

quantities of rum as to incite the indignation of the British commander-in-chief.[1] But instead of being able to undertake any formidable expedition against the settlers, the Detroit authorities were during this year much concerned for their own safety, taking every possible means to provide for the defense, and keeping a sharp lookout for any hostile movement of the Americans.[2]

The incoming settlers were therefore left in comparative peace. They built many small palisaded towns, some of which proved permanent, while others vanished utterly when the fear of the Indians was removed and the families were able to scatter out on their farms. At the Falls of the Ohio a regular fort was built, armed with cannon and garrisoned by Virginia troops,[3] who were sent down the river expressly to reinforce Clark. The Indians never dared assail this fort; but they ravaged up to its walls, destroying the small stations on Bear Grass Creek and scalping settlers and soldiers when they wandered far from the protection of the stockade.

The newcomers of 1779 were destined to begin with a grim experience, for the ensuing winter[4] was the most severe ever known in the West, and was long recalled by the pioneers as the "hard winter." Cold weather set in toward the end of November, the storms following one another in unbroken succession, while the snow lay deep until the spring. Most of the cattle, and very many of the horses, perished; and deer and elk were likewise found dead in the woods, or so weak and starved that they would hardly move out of the way, while the buffalo often came up at nightfall to the yards, seeking

[1] *Ibid.* Haldimand's letter, July 23, 1779. [2] *Ibid.* April 8, 1779.

[3] One hundred and fifty strong, under Colonel George Slaughter.

[4] Boone, in his "Narrative," makes a mistake in putting this hard winter a year later; all the other authorities are unanimous against him.

to associate with the starving herds of the settlers.[1] The scanty supply of corn gave out, until there was not enough left to bake into johnny-cakes on the long boards in front of the fire.[2] Even at the Falls, where there were stores for the troops, the price of corn went up nearly fourfold,[3] while elsewhere among the stations of the interior it could not be had at any price, and there was an absolute dearth both of salt and of vegetable food, the settlers living for weeks on the flesh of the lean wild game,[4] especially of the buffalo.[5] The hunters searched with especial eagerness for the bears in the hollow trees, for they alone among the animals kept fat; and the breast of the wild turkey served for bread.[6] Nevertheless, even in the midst of this season of cold and famine, the settlers began to take the first steps for the education of their children. In this year Joseph Doniphan, whose son long afterward won fame in the Mexican war, opened the first regular school at Boonesborough,[7] and one of the McAfees likewise served as a teacher through the winter.[8] But from the beginning some of the settlers' wives had now and then given the children in the forts a few weeks' schooling.

Through the long, irksome winter the frontiersmen remained crowded within the stockades. The men

[1] McAfee MSS. Of the McAfees' horses ten died, and only two survived, a brown mare and "a yellow horse called Chickasaw." Exactly a hundred years later, in the hard winter of 1879–80, and the still worse winter of 1880–81, the settlers on the Yellowstone and the few hunters who wintered on the Little Missouri had a similar experience. The buffalo crowded with the few tame cattle round the hay-ricks and log stables; the starving deer and antelope gathered in immense bands in sheltered places. Riding from my ranch to a neighbor's I have, in deep snows, passed through herds of antelope that would barely move fifty or a hundred feet out of my way.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] From fifty dollars (Continental money) a bushel in the fall to one hundred and seventy-five in the spring.

[4] McAfee MSS. [5] Boone's "Narrative." [6] McAfee MSS.

[7] *Historical Magazine*, Second Series, vol. VIII. [8] McAfee MSS.

hunted, while the women made the clothes, of tanned deer-hides, buffalo-wool cloth, and nettle-bark linen. In stormy weather, when none could stir abroad, they turned or coopered the wooden vessels; for tin cups were as rare as iron forks, and the "noggin" was either hollowed out of the knot of a tree, or else made with small staves and hoops.[1] Everything was of home manufacture—for there was not a store in Kentucky—and the most expensive domestic products seem to have been the hats, made of native fur, mink, coon, fox, wolf, and beaver. If exceptionally fine, and of valuable fur, they cost five hundred dollars in paper money, which had not at that time depreciated a quarter as much in outlying Kentucky as at the seat of government.[2]

As soon as the great snow-drifts began to melt, and thereby to produce freshets of unexampled height, the gaunt settlers struggled out to their clearings, glad to leave the forts. They planted corn, and eagerly watched the growth of the crop; and those who hungered after oatmeal or wheaten bread planted other grains as well, and apple-seeds and peach-stones.[3]

As soon as the spring of 1780 opened, the immigrants began to arrive more numerously than ever. Some came over the Wilderness Road; among these there were not a few haggard, half-famished beings, who, having started too late the previous fall, had been overtaken by the deep snows, and forced to pass the winter in the iron-bound and desolate valleys of the Alleghanies, subsisting on the carcasses of their stricken cattle, and seeing their weaker friends starve or freeze before their eyes. Very many came down the Ohio, in flatboats. A good-sized specimen of these huge, unwieldy scows was fifty-five feet long, twelve broad, and

[1] *Ibid.* [2] Marshall, p. 124. [3] McAfee MSS.

six deep, drawing three feet of water;[1] but the demand was greater than the supply, and a couple of dozen people, with half as many horses, and all their effects, might be forced to embark on a flatboat not twenty-four feet in length.[2] Usually several families came together, being bound by some tie of neighborhood or purpose. Not infrequently this tie was religious, for in the back settlements the few churches were almost as much social as religious centres. Thus, this spring, a third of the congregation of a Low Dutch Reformed Church came to Kentucky bodily, to the number of fifty heads of families, with their wives and children, their beasts of burden and pasture, and their household goods; like most bands of new immigrants, they suffered greatly from the Indians, much more than did the old settlers.[3] The following year a Baptist congregation came out from Virginia, keeping up its organization even while on the road, the preacher holding services at every long halt.

Soon after the rush of spring immigration was at its height, the old settlers and the newcomers alike were thrown into the utmost alarm by a formidable inroad of Indians, accompanied by French partisans, and led by a British officer. De Peyster, a New York Tory of old Knickerbocker family, had taken command at Detroit. He gathered the Indians around him from far and near, until the expense of subsidizing these savages became so enormous as to call forth serious complaints from headquarters.[4] He constantly endeavored to equip

[1] "Lettres d'un Cultivateur Américain, St. John de Creve Cœur," Paris, 1787, p. 407. He visited Kentucky in 1784.

[2] MS. "Journals of Rev. James Smith." Tours in Western country in 1785–1795 (in Colonel Durrett's library).

[3] State Department MSS., No. 41, vol. V, Memorials K, L, 1777–1787, pp. 95–97, "Petition of Low Dutch Reformed Church," etc.

[4] Haldimand MSS. Haldimand to Guy Johnson, June 30, 1780.

and send out different bands, not only to retake the Illinois and Vincennes, but to dislodge Clark from the Falls;[1] he was continually receiving scalps and prisoners, and by May he had fitted out two thousand warriors to act along the Ohio and the Wabash.[2] The rapid growth of Kentucky especially excited his apprehension,[3] and his main stroke was directed against the clusters of wooden forts that were springing up south of the Ohio.[4]

Late in May, some six hundred Indians and a few Canadians, with a couple of pieces of light field-artillery, were gathered and put under the command of Captain Henry Bird. Following the rivers where practicable, that he might the easier carry his guns, he went down the Miami, and, on the 22d of June, surprised and captured without resistance Ruddle's and Martin's stations, two small stockades on the south fork of the Licking.[5] But Bird was not one of the few men fitted to command such a force as that which followed him; and, contenting himself with the slight success he had won, he rapidly retreated to Detroit over the same path by which he had advanced. The Indians carried off many horses and loaded their prisoners with the plunder, tomahawking those, chiefly women and children, who could not keep up with the rest; and Bird could not control them nor force them to show mercy to their captives.[6] He did not even get his cannon back to De-

[1] *Ibid.* Haldimand to De Peyster, February 12 and July 6, 1780.

[2] *Ibid.* De Peyster to Haldimand, June 1, 1780.

[3] *Ibid.* March 8, 1780.

[4] *Ibid.* May 17 to July 19, 1780.

[5] He marched overland from the forks of the Licking. Marshall says the season was dry and the waters low; but the Bradford MSS. particularly declare that Bird only went up the Licking at all because the watercourses were so full, and that he had originally intended to attack the settlements at the Falls.

[6] Collins, Butler, etc. Marshall thinks that if the force could have been held together it would have depopulated Kentucky; but this is nonsense, for within a week Clark had gathered a very much larger and more efficient body of troops.

troit, leaving them at the British store in one of the upper Miami towns, in charge of a bombardier. The bombardier did not prove a very valorous personage, and, on the alarm of Clark's advance soon afterward, he permitted the Indians to steal his horses, and was forced to bury his ordnance in the woods.[1]

Before this inroad took place, Clark had been planning a foray into the Indian country, and the news only made him hasten his preparations. In May this adventurous leader had performed one of the feats which made him the darling of the backwoodsmen. Painted and dressed like an Indian, so as to deceive the lurking bands of savages, he and two companions left the fort he had built on the bank of the Mississippi, and came through the wilderness to Harrodsburg. They lived on the buffaloes they shot, and when they came to the Tennessee River, which was then in flood, they crossed the swift torrent on a raft of logs bound together with grape-vines. At Harrodsburg they found the land court open, and thronged with an eager, jostling crowd of settlers and speculators, who were waiting to enter lands in the surveyor's office. Even the dread of the Indians could not overcome in these men's hearts the keen and selfish greed for gain. Clark instantly grasped the situation. Seeing that while the court remained open he could get no volunteers, he on his own responsibility closed it offhand, and proclaimed that it would not be opened until after he came back from his expedition. The speculators grumbled and clamored, but this troubled Clark not at all, for he was able to get as many volunteers as he wished. The discontent, and still more

[1] Haldimand MSS. Letter of Bombardier William Homan, August 18, 1780. He speaks of "the gun" and "the smaller ordnance," presumably swivels. It is impossible to give Bird's numbers correctly, for various bands of Indians kept joining and leaving him.

the panic over Bird's inroad, made many of the settlers determine to flee from the country, but Clark sent a small force to Crab Orchard, at the mouth of the Wilderness Road, the only outlet from Kentucky, with instructions to stop all men from leaving the country, and to take away their arms if they persisted; while four-fifths of all the grown men were drafted, and were bidden to gather instantly for a campaign.[1]

He appointed the mouth of the Licking as the place of meeting. Thither he brought the troops from the Falls in light skiffs he had built for the purpose, leaving behind scarce a handful of men to garrison the stockade. Logan went with him as second in command. He carried with him a light three-pounder gun; and those of the men who had horses marched along the bank beside the flotilla. The only mishap that befell the troops happened to McGarry, who had a subordinate command. He showed his usual foolhardy obstinacy by persisting in landing with a small squad of men on the north bank of the river, where he was in consequence surprised and roughly handled by a few Indians. Nothing was done to him because of his disobedience, for the chief of such a backwoods levy was the leader, rather than the commander, of his men.

At the mouth of the Licking, Clark met the riflemen from the interior stations, among them being Kenton, Harrod, and Floyd, and others of equal note. They had turned out almost to a man, leaving the women and boys to guard the wooden forts until they came back, and had come to the appointed place, some on foot or on horseback, others floating and paddling down the Licking in canoes. They left scanty provisions with their families, who had to subsist during their absence

[1] Bradford MSS.

on what game the boys shot, on nettle tops, and a few early vegetables; and they took with them still less. Dividing up their stock, each man had a couple of pounds of meal, and some jerked venison or buffalo meat.[1]

All his troops having gathered, to the number of nine hundred and seventy, Clark started up the Ohio on the 2d of August.[2] The skiffs, laden with men, were poled against the current, while bodies of footmen and horsemen marched along the bank. After going a short distance upstream the horses and men were ferried to the farther bank, the boats were drawn up on the shore and left with a guard of forty men, and the rest of the troops started overland against the town of old Chillicothe, fifty or sixty miles distant. The three-pounder was carried along on a pack-horse. The march was hard, for it rained so incessantly that it was difficult to keep the rifles dry. Every night they encamped in a hollow square, with the baggage and horses in the middle.

Chillicothe, when reached, was found to be deserted. It was burned, and the army pushed on to Piqua, a town a few miles distant, on the banks of the Little Miami,[3] reaching it about ten in the morning of the 8th of August.[4] Piqua was substantially built, and was laid out in the manner of the French villages. The stoutly built log houses stood far apart, surrounded by strips of corn-land, and fronting the stream; while a

[1] McAfee MSS.; the Bradford MS. says six quarts of parched corn.

[2] This date and number are those given in the Bradford MS. The McAfee MSS. say July 1st; but it is impossible that the expedition should have started so soon after Bird's inroad. On July 1st, Bird himself was probably at the mouth of the Licking.

[3] The Indians so frequently shifted their abode that it is hardly possible to identify the exact location of the successive towns called Piqua or Pickaway.

[4] "Papers relating to G. R. Clark." In the Durrett MSS. at Louisville. The account of the death of Joseph Rogers. This settles, by the way, that the march was made in August, and not in July.

strong blockhouse with loopholed walls stood in the middle. Thick woods, broken by small prairies, covered the rolling country that lay around the town.

Clark divided his army into four divisions, taking the command of two in person. Giving the others to Logan, he ordered him to cross the river above the town[1] and take it in the rear, while he himself crossed directly below it and assailed it in front. Logan did his best to obey the orders, but he could not find a ford, and he marched by degrees nearly three miles upstream, making repeated and vain attempts to cross; when he finally succeeded, the day was almost done, and the fighting was over.

Meanwhile, Clark plunged into the river, and crossed at the head of one of his own two divisions; the other was delayed for a short time. Both Simon Girty and his brother were in the town, together with several hundred Indian warriors; exactly how many cannot be said, but they were certainly fewer in number than the troops composing either wing of Clark's army.[2] They were surprised by Clark's swift advance just as a scouting-

[1] There is some conflict as to whether Logan went up or down stream.

[2] Haldimand MSS. McKee to De Peyster, August 22, 1780. He was told of the battle by the Indians a couple of days after it took place. He gives the force of the whites correctly as nine hundred and seventy, forty of whom had been left to guard the boats. He says the Indians were surprised, and that most of the warriors fled, so that all the fighting was done by about seventy, with the two Girtys. This was doubtless not the case; the beaten party in all these encounters was fond of relating the valorous deeds of some of its members, who invariably state that they would have conquered, had they not been deserted by their associates. McKee reported that the Indians could find no trace of the gun-wheels—the gun was carried on a pack-horse—and so he thought that the Kentuckians were forced to leave it behind on their retreat. He put the killed of the Kentuckians at the modest number of forty-eight; and reported the belief of Girty and the Indians that "three hundred [of them] would have given [Clark's men] a total rout." A very common feat of the small frontier historian was to put high praise of his own side in the mouth of a foe. Withers, in his "Chronicles of Border Warfare," in speaking of this very action, makes Girty withdraw his three hundred warriors on account of the valor of Clark's men, remarking that it was "useless to fight with fools or madmen." This offers a comical contrast to Girty's real opinion, as shown in McKee's letter.

party of warriors, who had been sent out to watch the whites, were returning to the village. The warning was so short that the squaws and children had barely time to retreat out of the way. As Clark crossed the stream, the warriors left their cabins and formed in some thick timber behind them. At the same moment a cousin of Clark's, who had been captured by the Indians, and was held prisoner in the town, made his escape and ran toward the Americans, throwing up his hands, and calling out that he was a white man. He was shot, whether by the Americans or the Indians none could say. Clark came up and spoke a few words with him before he died.[1] A long-range skirmish ensued with the warriors in the timber; but on the approach of Clark's second division the Indians fell back. The two divisions followed in pursuit, becoming mingled in disorder. After a slight running fight of two hours, the whites lost sight of their foes, and wondering what had become of Logan's wing, they gathered together and marched back toward the river. One of the McAfees, captain over a company of riflemen from Salt River, was leading, when he discovered an Indian in a tree-top. He and one of his men sought shelter behind the same tree; whereupon he tried to glide behind another, but was shot and mortally wounded by the Indian, who was himself instantly killed. The scattered detachments now sat down to listen for the missing wing. After half an hour's silent waiting, they suddenly became aware of the presence of a body of Indians, who had slipped in between them and the town. The backwoodsmen rushed up to the attack, while the Indians whooped and yelled defiance. There was a moment's heavy firing;

[1] Durrett MSS. Volume: "Papers referring to G. R. Clark." The cousin's name was Joseph Rogers, a brother of the commander of the galley.

but as on both sides the combatants carefully sheltered themselves behind trees, there was very little loss; and the Indians steadily gave way until they reached the town, about two miles distant from the spot where the whites had halted. They then made a stand, and, for the first time, there occurred some real fighting. The Indians stood stoutly behind the loopholed walls of the cabins, and in the blockhouse; the Americans, advancing cautiously and gaining ground inch by inch, suffered much more loss than they inflicted. Late in the afternoon Clark managed to bring the three-pounder into action, from a point below the town; while the riflemen fired at the red warriors as they were occasionally seen running from the cabins to take refuge behind the steep bank of the river. A few shots from the three-pounder dislodged the defenders of the blockhouse; and about sunset the Americans closed in, but only to find that their foes had escaped under cover of a noisy fire from a few of the hindmost warriors. They had run upstream, behind the banks, until they came to a small "branch" or brook, by means of which they gained the shelter of the forest, where they at once scattered and disappeared. A few of their stragglers exchanged shots with the advance-guard of Logan's wing as it at last came down the bank; this was the only part Logan was able to take in the battle. Of the Indians six or eight were slain, whereas the whites lost seventeen killed, and a large number wounded.[1] Clark destroyed all the houses and a very large quantity of corn; and he sent

[1] Bradford MS.; the McAfee MSS. make the loss "15 or 20 Indians" in the last assault, and "nearly as many" whites. Boone's narrative says seventeen on each side. But McKee says only six Indians were killed and three wounded; and Bombardier Homan, in the letter already quoted, says six were killed and two captured, who were afterward slain. The latter adds from hearsay that the Americans cruelly slew an Indian woman; but there is not a syllable in any of the other accounts to confirm this, and it may be set down as a fiction of the by-no-means-valorous bom-

out detachments which destroyed another village, and the stores of some British and French-Canadian traders. Then the army marched back to the mouth of the Licking and disbanded, most of the volunteers having been out just twenty-five days.[1]

The Indians were temporarily cowed by their loss and the damage they had suffered,[2] and especially by the moral effect of so formidable a retaliatory foray following immediately on the heels of Bird's inroad. Therefore, thanks to Clark, the settlements south of the Ohio were but little molested for the remainder of the year.[3] The bulk of the savages remained north of the river, hovering about their burned towns, planning to take vengeance in the spring.[4]

Nevertheless small straggling bands of young braves occasionally came down through the woods; and although they did not attack any fort or any large body of men, they were ever on the watch to steal horses, burn lonely cabins, and waylay travellers between the stations. They shot the solitary settlers who had gone out to till their clearings by stealth, or ambushed the boys who were driving in the milk cows or visiting their lines of traps. It was well for the victim if he was killed at once; otherwise he was bound with hickory withes and driven to the distant Indian towns, there to be tortured with hideous cruelty and burned to death at the stake.[5] Boone himself suffered at the hands of

bardier. The bombardier mentions that the Indians in their alarm and anger immediately burnt all the male prisoners in their villages.

The Kentucky historians give very scanty accounts of this expedition; but as it was of a typical character it is worth while giving in full. The McAfee MSS. contain most information about it.

[1] Bradford MS.

[2] See Haldimand MSS. De Peyster to Haldimand, August 30, 1780.

[3] McAfee MSS.

[4] "Virginia State Papers," I, 451.

[5] McAfee MSS. The last was an incident that happened to a young man named McCoun, on March 8, 1781.

one of these parties. He had gone with his brother to the Blue Licks, to him a spot always fruitful of evil; and being ambushed by the Indians, his brother was killed, and he himself was only saved by his woodcraft and speed of foot. The Indians had with them a tracking-dog, by the aid of which they followed his trail for three miles, until he halted, shot the dog, and thus escaped.[1]

During this comparatively peaceful fall the settlers fared well, though the men were ever on the watch for Indian war-parties, while the mothers, if their children were naughty, frightened them into quiet with the threat that the Shawnees would catch them. The widows and the fatherless were cared for by the other families of the different stations. The season of want and scarcity had passed forever; from thenceforth on there was abundance in Kentucky. The crops did not fail; not only was there plenty of corn, the one essential, but there was also wheat, as well as potatoes, melons, pumpkins, turnips, and the like. Sugar was made by tapping the maple-trees; but salt was bought at a very exorbitant price at the Falls, being carried down in boats from the old Redstone fort. Flax had been generally sown (though in the poorer settlements nettle bark still served as a substitute), and the young men and girls formed parties to pick it, often ending their labor by an hour or two's search for wild plums. The men killed all the game they wished, and so there was no lack of meat. They also surveyed the land and tended the stock—cattle, horses, and hogs—which throve and multiplied out on the range, fattening on the cane and large white buffalo-clover. At odd times the men and boys visited their lines of traps. Furs

[1] Boone's "Narrative."

formed almost the only currency, except a little paper money; but as there were no stores west of the mountains, this was all that was needed, and each settlement raised most things for itself, and procured the rest by barter.

The law-courts were as yet very little troubled, each small community usually enforcing a rough-and-ready justice of its own. On a few of the streams log dams were built, and tub-mills started. In Harrodsburg a toll-mill was built in 1779. The owner used to start it grinding, and then go about his other business; once on returning he found a large wild turkey gobbler so busily breakfasting out of the hopper that he was able to creep quietly up and catch him with his hands. The people all worked together in cultivating their respective lands, coming back to the fort before dusk for supper. They would then call on any man who owned a fiddle and spend the evening, with interludes of singing and story-telling, in dancing—an amusement they considered as only below hunting. On Sundays the stricter parents taught their children the catechism; but in spite of the presence of not a few devout Baptists and Presbyterians there was little chance for general observance of religious forms. Ordinary conversation was limited to such subjects as bore on the day's doings; the game that had been killed, the condition of the crops, the plans of the settlers for the immediate future, the accounts of the last massacre by the savages, or the rumor that Indian sign had been seen in the neighborhood; all interspersed with much banter, practical joking, and rough, good-humored fun. The scope of conversation was of necessity narrowly limited even for the backwoods; for there was little chance to discuss religion and politics, the two subjects that the average back-

woodsman regards as the staples of deep conversation. The deeds of the Indians, of course, formed the one absorbing topic.[1]

An abortive separatist movement was the chief political sensation of this summer. Many hundreds and even thousands of settlers from the backwoods districts of various States had come to Kentucky, and some even to Illinois, and a number of them were greatly discontented with the Virginian rule. They deemed it too difficult to get justice when they were so far from the seat of government; they objected to the land being granted to any but actual settlers; and they protested against being taxed, asserting that they did not know whether the country really belonged to Virginia or the United States. Accordingly, they petitioned the Continental Congress that Kentucky and Illinois combined might be made into a separate State;[2] but no heed was paid to their request, nor did their leading men join in making it.

In November, the Virginia legislature divided Kentucky into the three counties of Jefferson, Lincoln, and Fayette, appointing for each a colonel, a lieutenant-colonel, and a surveyor. The three colonels, who were also justices of the counties,[3] were, in their order, John Floyd—whom Clark described as "a soldier, a gentleman and a scholar," [4]—Benjamin Logan, and John Todd. Clark, whose station was at the Falls of the Ohio, was brigadier-general and commander over all. Boone was lieutenant-colonel under Todd; and their county of Fayette had for its surveyor Thomas Mar-

[1] For all this, see McAfee MSS.

[2] State Department MSS., No. 48. See Note B. As containing an account of the first, and hitherto entirely unnoticed, separatist movement in Kentucky, I give the petition entire.

[3] Calendar of "Virginia State Papers," vol. II, p. 47. [4] *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 452.

shall,[1] the father of the great chief justice, whose services to the United States stand on a plane with those of Alexander Hamilton.[2]

The winter passed quietly away, but as soon as the snow was off the ground in 1781, the Indians renewed their ravages. Early in the winter Clark went to Virginia to try to get an army for an expedition against Detroit. He likewise applied to Washington for assistance. Washington fully entered into his plans, and saw their importance. He would gladly have rendered him every aid. But he could do nothing, because of the impotence to which the central authority, the Continental Congress, had been reduced by the selfishness and supine indifference of the various States—Virginia among the number. He wrote Clark: "It is out of my power to send any reinforcements to the westward. If the States would fill their continental battalions we should be able to oppose a regular and permanent force to the enemy in every quarter. If they will not, they must certainly take measures to defend themselves by their militia, however expensive and ruinous the system." [3] It was impossible to state with more straightforward clearness the fact that Kentucky owed the unprotected condition in which she was left, to the divided

[1] Collins, I, 20.

[2] Roughly, Fayette embraced the territory north and northeast of the Kentucky River, Jefferson that between Green River and the lower Kentucky, and Lincoln the rest of the present State.

[3] State Department MSS., No. 147, vol. V. Reports of Board of War. Letter of Washington, June 8, 1781. It is impossible to study any part of the Revolutionary struggle without coming to the conclusion that Washington would have ended it in half the time it actually lasted had the jangling States and their governments, as well as the Continental Congress, backed him up half as effectively as the Confederate people and government backed up Lee, or as the Northerners and the Washington administration backed up McClellan—still more, as they backed up Grant. The whole of our Revolutionary history is a running commentary on the anarchic weakness of disunion, and the utter lack of liberty that follows in its train.

or States'-rights system of government that then existed; and that she would have had ample protection—and, incidentally, greater liberty—had the central authority been stronger.

At last, Clark was empowered to raise the men he wished, and he passed and repassed from Fort Pitt to the Falls of the Ohio and thence to the Illinois in the vain effort to get troops. The inertness and short-sightedness of the frontiersmen, above all the exhaustion of the States, and their timid selfishness and inability to enforce their commands, baffled all of Clark's efforts. In his letters to Washington he bitterly laments his enforced dependence upon "persuasive arguments to draw the inhabitants of the country into the field." [1] The Kentuckians were anxious to do all in their power, but of course only a comparatively small number could be spared for so long a campaign from their scattered stockades. Around Pittsburg, where he hoped to raise the bulk of his forces, the frontiersmen were split into little factions by their petty local rivalries, the envy their leaders felt of Clark himself, and the never-ending jealousies and bickerings between the Virginians and Pennsylvanians.[2]

The fort at the Falls, where Clark already had some troops, was appointed as a gathering-place for the different detachments that were to join him, but, from one cause or another, all save one or two failed to appear. Most of them did not even start, and one body of Pennsylvanians that did go met with an untoward

[1] State Department MSS. Letters to Washington, vol. XLIX, p. 235, May 21, 1781. The entire history of the Western operations shows the harm done by the weak and divided system of government that obtained at the time of the Revolution, and emphasizes our good fortune in replacing it by a strong and permanent Union.

[2] Calendar of "Virginia State Papers," I, pp. 502, 597, etc.; II, pp. 108, 116, 264, 345. The Kentuckians were far more eager for action than the Pennsylvanians.

fate. This was a party of a hundred Westmoreland men under their county lieutenant, Colonel Archibald Loughry. They started down the Ohio in flatboats, but having landed on a sand-bar to butcher and cook a buffalo that they had killed, they were surprised by an equal number of Indians under Joseph Brant, and being huddled together, were all slain or captured with small loss to their assailants.[1] Many of the prisoners, including Loughry himself, were afterward murdered in cold blood by the Indians.

During this year the Indians continually harassed the whole frontier, from Pennsylvania to Kentucky, ravaging the settlements and assailing the forts in great bands of five or six hundred warriors.[2] The Continental troops stationed at Fort Pitt were reduced to try every expedient to procure supplies. Though it was evident that the numbers of the hostile Indians had largely increased, and that even such tribes as the Delawares, who had been divided, were now united against the Americans, nevertheless, because of the scarcity of food, a party of soldiers had to be sent into the Indian country to kill buffalo, that the garrison might have meat.[3] The Indians threatened to attack the fort itself, as well as the villages it protected; passing around and on each side, their war-parties ravaged the country in its rear,

[1] At Loughry's Creek, some ten miles below the mouth of the Miami, on August 24, 1781. "Diary of Captain Isaac Anderson," quoted in *Indiana Historical Society Pamphlets*, No. 4, by Charles Martindale, Indianapolis, 1888. Collins, whose accuracy by no means equals his thirst for pure detail, puts this occurrence just a year too late. Brant's force was part of a body of several hundred Indians, gathered to resist Clark.

[2] It is most difficult to get at the number of the Indian parties; they were sometimes grossly exaggerated and sometimes hopelessly underestimated. The commanders at the unmolested forts and the statesmen who stayed at home only saw those members of the tribes who claimed to be peaceful, and invariably put the number of warriors on the war-path at far too low a figure. Madison's estimates, for instance, were very much out of the way, yet many modern critics follow him.

[3] State Department MSS., No. 147, vol. VI. Reports of Board of War. March 15, 1781.

distressing greatly the people; and from this time until peace was declared with Great Britain, and indeed until long after that event, the westernmost Pennsylvanians knew neither rest nor safety.[1] Among many others the forted village at Wheeling was again attacked. But its most noteworthy siege occurred during the succeeding summer, when Simon Girty, with fife and drum, led a large band of Indians and Detroit rangers against it, only to be beaten off. The siege was rendered memorable by the heroism of a girl, who carried powder from the stockade to an outlying log house, defended by four men; she escaped unscathed because of her very boldness, in spite of the fire from so many rifles, and to this day the mountaineers speak of her deed.[2]

It would be tiresome and profitless to so much as name the many different stations that were attacked. In their main incidents all the various assaults were alike, and that made this summer on McAfee's station may be taken as an illustration.

[1] *Ibid.*, No. 148, vol. I, January 4, 1781; No. 149, vol. I, August 6, 1782; No. 149, vol. II, p. 461; No. 149, vol. III, p. 183. Federal garrisons were occasionally established at, or withdrawn from, other posts on the upper Ohio besides Fort Pitt; but their movements had no permanent value, and only require chronicling by the local, State, or county historians. In 1778, Fort McIntosh was built at Beaver Creek, on the north bank of the Ohio, and Fort Laurens seventy miles toward the interior. The latter was soon abandoned; the former was in Pennsylvania, and a garrison was kept there.

[2] See De Haas, 263–281, for the fullest and probably most accurate account of the siege; as already explained, he is the most trustworthy of the border historians. But it is absolutely impossible to find out the real facts concerning the sieges of Wheeling; it is not quite certain even whether there were two or three. The testimony as to whether the heroine of the powder feat was Betty Zane or Molly Scott is hopelessly conflicting; we do not know which of the two brothers Girty was in command, nor whether either was present at the first attack. Much even of De Haas's account is, to put it mildly, greatly embellished; as, for instance, his statement about the cannon (a small French gun, thrown into the Monongahela when Fort Du Quesne was abandoned, and fished up by a man named Naly, who was in swimming), which he asserts cut "a wide passage" through the "deep columns" of the savages. There is no reason to suppose that the Indians suffered a serious loss. Wheeling was a place of little strategic importance, and its fall would not have produced any far-reaching effects.

The McAfees brought their wives and children to Kentucky in the fall of '79, and built a little stockaded hamlet on the banks of Salt River, six or seven miles from Harrodsburg. Some relatives and friends joined them, but their station was small and weak. The stockade, on the south side, was very feeble, and there were but thirteen men, besides the women and children, in garrison; but they were strong and active, good woodsmen, and excellent marksmen. The attack was made on May 4, 1781.[1]

The Indians lay all night at a corn-crib three-quarters of a mile distant from the stockade. The settlers, though one of their number had been carried off two months before, still continued their usual occupations. But they were very watchful and always kept a sharp lookout, driving the stock inside the yard at night. On the day in question, at dawn, it was noticed that the dogs and cattle betrayed symptoms of uneasiness; for all tame animals dreaded the sight or smell of an Indian as they did that of a wild beast, and by their alarm often warned the settlers and thus saved their lives.

In this case the warning was unheeded. At daybreak the stock were turned loose and four of the men went outside the fort. Two began to clear a patch of turnip-land about a hundred and fifty yards off, leaving their guns against a tree close at hand. The other two started toward the corn-crib, with a horse and bag. After going a quarter of a mile, the path dipped into a hollow, and here they suddenly came on the Indians, advancing stealthily toward the fort. At the first fire one of the men was killed, and the horse, breaking loose, galloped

[1] McAfee MSS. This is the date given in the MS. "Autobiography of Robert McAfee"; the MS. "History of First Settlement on Salt River" says May 6th. I draw my account from these two sources; the discrepancies are trivial.

back to the fort. The other man likewise turned and ran toward home, but was confronted by an Indian who leaped into the path directly ahead of him. The two were so close together that the muzzles of their guns crossed, and both pulled trigger at once; the Indian's gun missed fire and he fell dead in his tracks. Continuing his flight, the survivor reached the fort in safety.

When the two men in the turnip-patch heard the firing they seized their guns and ran toward the point of attack, but seeing the number of the assailants they turned back to the fort, trying to drive the frightened stock before them. The Indians coming up close, they had to abandon the attempt, although most of the horses and some of the cattle got safely home. One of the men reached the gate ahead of the Indians; the other was cut off, and took a roundabout route through the woods. He speedily distanced all of his pursuers but one; several times he turned to shoot the latter, but the Indian always took prompt refuge behind a tree, and the white man then renewed his flight. At last he reached a fenced orchard, on the border of the cleared ground round the fort. Throwing himself over the fence he lay still among the weeds on the other side. In a minute or two the pursuer, running up, cautiously peered over the fence, and was instantly killed; he proved to be a Shawnee chief, painted, and decked with many silver armlets, rings, and brooches. The fugitive then succeeded in making his way into the fort.

The settlers inside the stockade had sprung to arms the moment the first guns were heard. The men fired on the advancing Indians, while the women and children ran bullets and made ready the rifle-patches. Every one displayed the coolest determination, except one man who hid under a bed, until found by his wife,

whereupon he was ignominiously dragged out and made to run bullets with the women.

As the Indians advanced they shot down most of the cattle and hogs and some of the horses that were running frantically round the stockade; and they likewise shot several dogs that had sallied out to help their masters. They then made a rush on the fort, but were driven off at once, one of their number being killed and several badly hurt, while but one of the defenders was wounded, and he but slightly. After this they withdrew to cover and began a desultory firing, which lasted for some time.

Suddenly a noise like distant thunder came to the ears of the men in the fort. It was the beat of horse-hoofs. In a minute or two forty-five horsemen, headed by McGarry, appeared on the road leading from Harrodsburg, shouting and brandishing their rifles as they galloped up. The morning was so still that the firing had been heard a very long way; and a band of mounted riflemen had gathered in hot haste to go to the relief of the beleaguered stockade.

The Indians, whooping defiance, retired; while McGarry halted a moment to allow the rescued settlers to bridle their horses—saddles were not thought of. The pursuit was then begun at full speed. At the ford of a small creek near by, the rearmost Indians turned and fired at the horsemen, killing one and wounding another, while a third had his horse mired down, and was left behind. The main body was overtaken at the corn-crib, and a running fight followed; the whites leaving their horses and both sides taking shelter behind the tree trunks. Soon two Indians were killed, and the others scattered in every direction, while the victors returned in triumph to the station.

It is worthy of notice that though the Indians were defeated, and though they were pitted against first-class rifle-shots, they yet had but five men killed and a very few wounded. They rarely suffered a heavy loss in battle with the whites, even when beaten in the open or repulsed from a fort. They would not stand heavy punishment, and in attacking a fort generally relied upon a single headlong rush, made under cover of darkness or as a surprise; they tried to unnerve their antagonists by the sudden fury of their onslaught and the deafening accompaniment of whoops and yells. If they began to suffer much loss they gave up at once, and if pursued scattered in every direction, each man for himself, and, owing to their endurance, woodcraft, and skill in hiding, usually got off with marvellously little damage. At the outside a dozen of their men might be killed in the pursuit by such of the vengeful backwoodsmen as were exceptionally fleet of foot. The northwestern tribes at this time appreciated thoroughly that their marvellous fighting qualities were shown to best advantage in the woods, and neither in the defense nor in the assault of fortified places. They never cooped themselves in stockades to receive an attack from the whites, as was done by the Massachusetts Algonquins in the seventeenth century, and by the Creeks at the beginning of the nineteenth; and it was only when behind defensive works from which they could not retreat that the forest Indians ever suffered heavily when defeated by the whites. On the other hand, the defeat of the average white force was usually followed by a merciless slaughter. Skilled backwoodsmen scattered out, Indian fashion, but their less skilful or more panic-struck brethren, and all regulars or ordinary militia, kept together from a kind of blind feeling of safety in com-

panionship, and in consequence their nimble and ruthless antagonists destroyed them at their ease.

Still, the Indian war-parties were often checked or scattered; and occasionally one of them received some signal discomfiture. Such was the case with a band that went up the Kanawha valley just as Clark was descending the Ohio on his way to the Illinois. Finding the fort at the mouth of the Kanawha too strong to be carried, they moved on up the river toward the Greenbriar settlements, their chiefs shouting threateningly to the people in the fort, and taunting them with the impending destruction of their friends and kindred. But two young men in the stockade forthwith dressed and painted themselves like Indians, that they might escape notice even if seen, and speeding through the woods reached the settlements first and gave warning. The settlers took refuge on a farm where there was a blockhouse with a stockaded yard. The Indians attacked in a body at daybreak when the door was opened, thinking to rush into the house; but they were beaten off, and paid dear for their boldness, for seventeen of them were left dead in the yard, besides the killed and wounded whom they carried away.[1] In the same year a blockhouse was attacked while the children were playing outside. The Indians in their sudden rush killed one settler, wounded four, and actually got inside the house;

[1] McKee was the commander at the fort; the blockhouse was owned by Colonel Andrew Donelly; Hanlon and Prior were the names of the two young men. This happened in May, 1778. For the anecdotes of personal prowess in this chapter, see De Haas, or else Kercheval, McClung, Doddridge, and the fifty other annalists of those Western wars, who repeat many of the same stories. All relate facts of undoubted authenticity and wildly improbable tales, resting solely on tradition, with exactly the same faith. The chronological order of these anecdotes being unimportant, I have grouped them here. It must always be remembered that both the men and the incidents described are interesting chiefly as examples; the old annalists give many hundreds of such anecdotes, and there must have been thousands more that they did not relate.

yet three were killed or disabled, and they were driven out by the despairing fury of the remaining whites, the women fighting together with the men. Then the savages instantly fled, but they had killed and scalped, or carried off, ten of the children. Be it remembered that these instances are taken at random from among hundreds of others, extending over a series of years longer than the average life of a generation.

The Indians warred with the odds immeasurably in their favor. The Ohio was the boundary between their remaining hunting-grounds and the lands where the whites had settled. In Kentucky alone this frontier was already seventy miles in length.[1] Beyond the river stretched the frowning forest, to the Indians a sure shield in battle, a secure haven in disaster, an impenetrable mask from behind which to plan attack. Clark, from his post at the Falls, sent out spies and scouts along the banks of the river, and patrolled its waters with his gunboat; but it was absolutely impossible to stop all the forays or to tell the point likely to be next struck. A war-party starting from the wigwam towns would move silently down through the woods, cross the Ohio at any point, and stealthily and rapidly traverse the settlements, its presence undiscovered until the deeds of murder and rapine were done, and its track marked by charred cabins and the ghastly, mutilated bodies of men, women, and children.

If themselves assailed, the warriors fought desperately and effectively. They sometimes attacked bodies of troops, but always by ambush or surprise; and they much preferred to pounce on unprepared and unsuspecting surveyors, farmers, or wayfarers, or to creep up

[1] "Virginia State Papers," I, 437. Letter of Colonel John Floyd. The Kentuckians, he notices, trust militia more than they do regulars.

to solitary, outlying cabins. They valued the scalps of women and children as highly as those of men. Striking a sudden blow, where there was hardly any possibility of loss to themselves, they instantly moved on to the next settlement, repeating the process again and again. Tireless, watchful, cautious, and rapid, they covered great distances, and their stealth and the mystery of their coming and going added to the terror produced by the horrible nature of their ravages. When pursued, they dexterously covered their trail, and started homeward across a hundred leagues of trackless wilderness. The pursuers almost of necessity went slower, for they had to puzzle out the tracks; and after a certain number of days either their food gave out or they found themselves too far from home, and were obliged to return. In most instances the pursuit was vain. Thus a party of twenty savages might make a war trail some hundreds of miles in length, taking forty or fifty scalps, carrying off a dozen women and children, and throwing a number of settlements, with perhaps a total population of a thousand souls, into a rage of terror and fury, with a loss to themselves of but one or two men killed and wounded.

Throughout the summer of 1781 the settlers were scourged by an unbroken series of raids of this kind. In August, McKee, Brant, and other Tory and Indian leaders assembled on the Miami an army of perhaps a thousand warriors. They were collected to oppose Clark's intended march to Detroit; for the British leaders were well aware of Clark's intention, and trusted to the savages to frustrate it if he attempted to put it into execution. Brant went off for a scout with a hundred warriors, and destroyed Loughry's party of Westmoreland men, as already related, returning to the main

body after having done so. The fickle savages were much elated by this stroke, but instead of being inspired to greater efforts, took the view that the danger of invasion was now over. After much persuasion, Brant, McKee, and the captain of the Detroit Rangers, Thompson, persuaded them to march toward the Falls. On September 9th, they were within thirty miles of their destination, and halted to send out scouts. Two prisoners were captured, from whom it was learned that Clark had abandoned his proposed expedition.[1] Instantly the Indians began to disband, some returning to their homes, and others scattering out to steal horses and burn isolated cabins. Nor could the utmost efforts of their leaders keep them together. They had no wish to fight Clark unless it was absolutely necessary in order to save their villages and crops from destruction; and they much preferred plundering on their own account. However, a couple of hundred Hurons and Miamis, under Brant and McKee, were kept together, and moved southward between the Kentucky and Salt rivers, intending "to attack some of the small forts and infest the roads."[2] About the middle of the month they fell in with a party of settlers led by Squire Boone.

Squire Boone had built a fort, some distance from any other, and when rumors of a great Indian invasion reached him, he determined to leave it and join the stations on Bear Grass Creek. When he reached Long Run, with his men, women, and children, cattle, and household goods, he stumbled against the two hundred warriors of McKee and Brant. His people were scattered to the four winds, with the loss of many scalps and all their goods and cattle. The victors camped on

[1] Haldimand MSS. Captain A. Thompson to De Peyster, September 26, 1781.
[2] *Ibid.* Captain A. McKee to De Peyster, September 26, 1781.

the ground with the intention of ambushing any party that arrived to bury the dead; for they were confident some of the settlers would come for this purpose. Nor were they disappointed; for next morning Floyd, the county lieutenant, with twenty-five men, made his appearance. Floyd marched so quickly that he came on the Indians before they were prepared to receive him. A smart skirmish ensued; but the whites were hopelessly outnumbered, and were soon beaten and scattered, with a loss of twelve or thirteen men. Floyd himself, exhausted, and with his horse shot, would have been captured had not another man, one Samuel Wells, who was excellently mounted, seen his plight. Wells reined in, leaped off his horse, and, making Floyd ride, he ran beside him and both escaped. The deed was doubly noble, because the men had previously been enemies.[1] The frontiersmen had made a good defense in spite of the tremendous odds against them, and had slain four of their opponents, three Hurons and a Miami.[2] Among the former was the head chief, a famous warrior; his death so discouraged the Indians that they straightway returned home with their scalps and plunder, resisting McKee's entreaty that they would first attack Boonesborough.

One war-party carried off Logan's family; but Logan,

[1] Marshall, I, 116. Floyd had previously written Jefferson ("Virginia State Papers," I, 47) that in his country there were but three hundred and fifty-four militia between sixteen and fifty-four years old; that all people were living in forts, and that forty-seven of the settlers of all ages had been killed, and many wounded, since January; so his defeat was a serious blow.

[2] Haldimand MSS. Thompson's letter; McKee only mentions the three Hurons. As already explained, the partisan leaders were apt, in enumerating the Indian losses, only to give such as had occurred in their own particular bands. Marshall makes the fight take place in April; the Haldimand MSS. show that it was in September. Marshall is as valuable for early Kentucky history as Haywood for the corresponding periods in Tennessee; but both one and the other write largely from tradition, and can never be followed when they contradict contemporary reports.

following swiftly after, came on the savages so suddenly that he killed several of their number, and rescued all his own people unhurt.[1]

Often French-Canadians, and more rarely Tories, accompanied these little bands of murderous plunderers[2] —besides the companies of Detroit Rangers who went with the large war-parties—and they were all armed and urged on by the British at Detroit. One of the official British reports to Lord George Germain, made on October 23d of this year, deals with the Indian war-parties employed against the northwestern frontier. "Many smaller Indian parties have been very successful. . . . It would be endless and difficult to enumerate to your Lordship the parties that are continually employed upon the back settlements. From the Illinois country to the frontiers of New York there is a continual succession . . . the perpetual terror and losses of the inhabitants will I hope operate powerfully in our favor"[3]—so runs the letter. At the same time the British commander in Canada was pointing out to his subordinate at Detroit that the real danger to British rule arose from the extension of the settlements westward, and that this the Indians could prevent; in other words, the savages were expressly directed to make war on non-combatants, for it was impossible to attack a settlement without attacking the women and children therein.[4] In return, the frontiersmen speedily grew to re-

[1] Bradford MSS.

[2] At this very time a small band that had captured a family in the Kanawha valley were pursued fifty miles, overtaken, several killed and wounded, and the prisoners recaptured, by Colonel Andrew Donelly, mentioned in a previous note; it consisted of two French and eight Indians. "Virginia State Papers," I, 601.

[3] See full copy of the letter in Mr. Martindale's excellent pamphlet, above quoted.

[4] Haldimand MSS. Haldimand to De Peyster, June 24, 1781. Throughout the letters of the British officers at and near Detroit there are constant allusions to scalps being brought in; but not one word, as far as I have seen, to show that the Indians were ever reproved because many of the scalps were those of women and

gard both British and Indians with the same venomous and indiscriminate anger.

In the writings of the early annalists of these Indian wars are to be found the records of countless deeds of individual valor and cowardice, prowess and suffering, of terrible woe in time of disaster and defeat, and of the glutting of ferocious vengeance in the days of triumphant reprisal. They contain tales of the most heroic courage and of the vilest poltroonery; for the iron times brought out all that was best and all that was basest in the human breast. We read of husbands leaving their wives, and women their children, to the most dreadful of fates, on the chance that they themselves might thereby escape; and, on the other hand, we read again and again of the noblest acts of self-sacrifice, where the man freely gave his life for that of his wife or child, his brother or his friend. Many deeds of unflinching loyalty are recorded, but very, very few where magnanimity was shown to a fallen foe. The women shared the stern qualities of the men; often it happened that when the house-owner had been shot down, his wife made good the defense of the cabin with rifle or with axe, hewing valiantly at the savages who tried to break through the door, or dig under the puncheon floor, or, perhaps, burst down through the roof or wide chimney. Many hundreds of these tales could be gathered together; one or two are worth giving, not as being unique, but rather as samples of innumerable others of the same kind.

In those days[1] there lived beside the Ohio, in extreme

children. It is only fair to say, however, that there are several instances of the commanders exhorting the Indians to be merciful—which was a waste of breath—and several other instances where successful efforts were made to stop the use of torture. The British officers were generally personally humane to their prisoners.

[1] 1781, De Haas; Doddridge, whom the other compilers follow, gives a wrong date (1782), and reverses the parts the two brothers played.

northwestern Virginia, two tall brothers, famed for their strength, agility, and courage. They were named Adam and Andrew Poe. In the summer of '81 a party of seven Wyandots or Hurons came into their settlement, burned some cabins, and killed one of the settlers. Immediately eight backwoodsmen started in chase of the marauders; among them were the two Poes.

The Wyandots were the bravest of all the Indian tribes, the most dangerous in battle, and the most merciful in victory, rarely torturing their prisoners; the backwoodsmen respected them for their prowess more than they did any other tribe, and, if captured, esteemed themselves fortunate to fall into Wyandot hands. These seven warriors were the most famous and dreaded of the whole tribe. They included four brothers, one being the chief Bigfoot, who was of gigantic strength and stature, the champion of all, their most fearless and redoubtable fighter, yet their very confidence ruined them, for they retreated in a leisurely manner, caring little whether they were overtaken or not, as they had many times worsted the whites, and did not deem them their equals in battle.

The backwoodsmen followed the trail swiftly all day long, and, by the help of the moon, late into the night. Early next morning they again started and found themselves so near the Wyandots that Andrew Poe turned aside and went down to the bed of a neighboring stream, thinking to come up behind the Indians while they were menaced by his comrades in front. Hearing a low murmur, he crept up through the bushes to a jutting rock on the brink of the watercourse, and, peering cautiously over, he saw two Indians beneath him. They were sitting under a willow, talking in deep whispers; one was an ordinary warrior, the other, by his gigantic size,

was evidently the famous chief himself. Andrew took steady aim at the big chief's breast and pulled trigger. The rifle flashed in the pan; and the two Indians sprang to their feet with a deep grunt of surprise. For a second all three stared at one another. Then Andrew sprang over the rock, striking the big Indian's breast with a shock that bore him to the earth; while at the moment of alighting, he threw his arm round the small Indian's neck, and all three rolled on the ground together.

At this instant they heard sharp firing in the woods above them. The rest of the whites and Indians had discovered one another at the same time. A furious but momentary fight ensued; three backwoodsmen and four Indians were killed outright, no other white being hurt, while the single remaining red warrior made his escape, though badly wounded. But the three men who were struggling for life and death in the ravine had no time to pay heed to outside matters. For a moment Andrew kept down both his antagonists, who were stunned by the shock; but before he could use his knife the big Indian wrapped him in his arms and held him as if in a vise. This enabled the small Indian to wrest himself loose, when the big chief ordered him to run for his tomahawk, which lay on the sand ten feet away, and to kill the white man as he lay powerless in the chief's arms. Andrew could not break loose, but, watching his chance, as the small Indian came up, he kicked him so violently in the chest that he knocked the tomahawk out of his hand and sent him staggering into the water. Thereat the big chief grunted out his contempt, and thundered at the small Indian a few words that Andrew could not understand. The small Indian again approached and after making several feints, struck with the tomahawk, but Andrew dodged and received the

blow on his wrist instead of his head; and the wound, though deep, was not disabling. By a sudden and mighty effort he now shook himself free from the giant, and, snatching up a loaded rifle from the sand, shot the small Indian as he rushed on him. But at that moment the larger Indian, rising up, seized him and hurled him to the ground. He was on his feet in a second, and the two grappled furiously, their knives being lost; Andrew's activity and skill as a wrestler and boxer making amends for his lack of strength. Locked in each other's arms they rolled into the water. Here each tried to drown the other, and Andrew catching the chief by the scalp-lock held his head under the water until his faint struggles ceased. Thinking his foe dead, he loosed his grip to get at his knife, but, as Andrew afterward said, the Indian had only been "playing 'possum," and in a second the struggle was renewed. Both combatants rolled into deep water, when they separated and struck out for the shore. The Indian proved the best swimmer, and ran up to the rifle that lay on the sand, whereupon Andrew turned to swim out into the stream, hoping to save his life by diving. At this moment his brother Adam appeared on the bank, and seeing Andrew covered with blood and swimming rapidly away, mistook him for an Indian, and shot him in the shoulder. Immediately afterward he saw his real antagonist. Both had empty guns and the contest became one as to who could beat the other in loading, the Indian exclaiming: "Who load first, shoot first!" The chief got his powder down first, but, in hurriedly drawing out his ramrod, it slipped through his fingers and fell in the river. Seeing that it was all over, he instantly faced his foe, pulled open the bosom of his shirt, and the next moment received the ball fair in his breast. Adam, alarmed for his brother,

who by this time could barely keep himself afloat, rushed into the river to save him, not heeding Andrew's repeated cries to take the big Indian's scalp. Meanwhile the dying chief, resolute to save the long locks his enemies coveted—always a point of honor among the red men—painfully rolled himself into the stream. Before he died he reached the deep water, and the swift current bore his body away.

About this time a hunter named McConnell was captured near Lexington by five Indians. At night he wriggled out of his bonds and slew four of his sleeping captors, while the fifth, who escaped, was so bewildered that, on reaching the Indian town, he reported that his party had been attacked at night by a number of whites, who had not only killed his companions but the prisoner likewise.

A still more remarkable event had occurred a couple of summers previously. Some keel-boats, manned by a hundred men under Lieutenant Rogers, and carrying arms and provisions procured from the Spaniards at New Orleans, were set upon by an Indian war-party under Girty and Elliott,[1] while drawn up on a sand beach of the Ohio. The boats were captured and plundered, and most of the men were killed; several escaped, two under very extraordinary circumstances. One had both his arms, the other both his legs, broken. They lay hid till the Indians disappeared, and then accidentally discovered each other. For weeks the two crippled beings lived in the lonely spot where the battle had been fought, unable to leave it, each supplementing what the other could do. The man who could walk kicked wood to him who could not, that he might make a fire, and, making long circuits, chased the game toward

[1] Haldimand MSS. De Peyster to Haldimand, November 1, 1779.

him for him to shoot it. At last they were taken off by a passing flatboat.

The backwoodsmen, wonted to vigorous athletic pastimes, and to fierce brawls among themselves, were generally overmatches for the Indians in hand-to-hand struggles. One such fight, that took place some years before this time, deserves mention. A man of herculean strength and of fierce, bold nature, named Bingaman, lived on the frontier in a lonely log house. The cabin had but a single room below, in which Bingaman slept, as well as his mother, wife, and child; a hired man slept in the loft. One night eight Indians assailed the house. As they burst in the door Bingaman thrust the women and the child under the bed, his wife being wounded by a shot in the breast. Then, having discharged his piece, he began to beat about at random with the long heavy rifle. The door swung partially to, and in the darkness nothing could be seen. The numbers of the Indians helped them but little, for Bingaman's tremendous strength enabled him to shake himself free whenever grappled. One after another his foes sank under his crushing blows, killed or crippled; it is said that at last but one was left, to flee from the house in terror. The hired man had not dared to come down from the loft, and when Bingaman found his wife wounded he became so enraged that it was with difficulty he could be kept from killing him.[1]

Incidents such as these followed one another in quick succession. They deserve notice less for their own sakes than as examples of the way the West was won; for the

[1] It is curious how faithfully, as well as vividly, Cooper has reproduced these incidents. His pictures of the white frontiersmen are generally true to life; in his most noted Indian characters he is much less fortunate. But his "Indian John" in the "Pioneers" is one of his best portraits; almost equal praise can be given to "Susquesus" in the "Chainbearers."

land was really conquered not so much by the actual shock of battle between bodies of soldiers, as by the continuous westward movement of the armed settlers and the unceasing individual warfare waged between them and their red foes.

For the same reason one or two of the more noted hunters and Indian scouts deserve mention, as types of hundreds of their fellows who spent their lives and met their deaths in the forest. It was their warfare that really did most to diminish the fighting force of the tribes. They battled exactly as their foes did, making forays, alone or in small parties, for scalps and horses, and in their skirmishes inflicted as much loss as they received; in striking contrast to what occurred in conflicts between the savages and regular troops.

One of the most formidable of these hunters was Lewis Wetzel.[1] Boone, Kenton, and Harrod illustrate by their lives the nobler, kindlier traits of the dauntless border-folk; Wetzel, like McGarry, shows the dark side of the picture. He was a good friend to his white neighbors, or at least to such of them as he liked, and as a hunter and fighter there was not in all the land his superior. But he was of brutal and violent temper, and for the Indians he knew no pity and felt no generosity. They had killed many of his friends and relations, among others his father; and he hunted them in peace or war like wolves. His admirers denied that he ever showed "unwonted cruelty"[2] to Indian women and children; that he sometimes killed them cannot be gainsaid. Some of his feats were cold-blooded murders, as when he killed an Indian who came in to treat with

[1] The name is variously spelt; in the original German records of the family it appears as Wätzel, or Watzel.

[2] De Haas, 345.

General Harmar, under pledge of safe-conduct; one of his brothers slew in like fashion a chief who came to see Colonel Brodhead. But the frontiersmen loved him, for his mere presence was a protection, so great was the terror he inspired among the red men. His hardihood and address were only equalled by his daring and courage. He was literally a man without fear; in his few days of peace his chief amusements were wrestling, foot-racing, and shooting at a mark. He was a dandy, too, after the fashion of the backwoods, especially proud of his mane of long hair, which, when he let it down, hung to his knees. He often hunted alone in the Indian country, a hundred miles beyond the Ohio. As he dared not light a bright fire on these trips, he would, on cold nights, make a small coal-pit, and cower over it, drawing his blanket over his head, when, to use his own words, he soon became as hot as in a "stove room." Once he surprised four Indians sleeping in their camp; falling on them he killed three. Another time, when pursued by the same number of foes, he loaded his rifle as he ran, and killed in succession the three foremost, whereat the other fled. In all, he took over thirty scalps of warriors, thus killing more Indians than were slain by either one of the two large armies of Braddock and St. Clair during their disastrous campaigns. Wetzel's frame, like his heart, was of steel. But his temper was too sullen and unruly for him ever to submit to command or to bear rule over others. His feats were performed when he was either alone or with two or three associates. An army of such men would have been wholly valueless.

Another man, of a far higher type, was Captain Samuel Brady, already a noted Indian fighter on the Alleghany. For many years after the close of the Revo-

lutionary War he was the chief reliance of the frontiersmen of his own neighborhood. He had lost a father and a brother by the Indians; and in return he followed the red men with relentless hatred. But he never killed peaceful Indians nor those who came in under flags of truce. The tale of his wanderings, his captivities, his hairbreadth escapes, and deeds of individual prowess would fill a book. He frequently went on scouts alone, either to procure information or to get scalps. On these trips he was not only often reduced to the last extremity by hunger, fatigue, and exposure, but was in hourly peril of his life from the Indians he was hunting. Once he was captured; but when about to be bound to the stake for burning he suddenly flung an Indian boy into the fire, and in the confusion burst through the warriors, and actually made his escape, though the whole pack of yelling savages followed at his heels with rifle and tomahawk. He raised a small company of scouts or rangers, and was one of the very few captains able to reduce the unruly frontiersmen to order. In consequence, his company on several occasions fairly whipped superior numbers of Indians in the woods; a feat that no regulars could perform, and to which the backwoodsmen themselves were generally unequal (even though an overmatch for their foes singly), because of their disregard of discipline.[1]

So, with foray and reprisal, and fierce private war, with all the border in a flame, the year 1781 came to an end. At its close there were in Kentucky seven hundred and sixty able-bodied militia, fit for an offensive campaign.[2] As this did not include the troops at

[1] In the open plain the comparative prowess of these forest Indians, of the backwoodsmen, and of trained regulars was exactly the reverse of what it was in the woods.

[2] Letter of John Todd, October 21, 1781. "Virginia State Papers," II, 562. The

the Falls, nor the large shifting population, nor the "fort soldiers," the weaker men, graybeards, and boys, who could handle a rifle behind a stockade, it is probable that there were then somewhere between four and five thousand souls in Kentucky.

NOTE A

(From Canadian Archives.)

(Haldimand MSS., Series B, Vol. CXXII, p. 351.)

(*Copy.*)

Upper St. Duski, June 9, 1779.

Dear Sir,

After much running about, some presents to Chiefs, we had collected at the Mingo Town near 200 Savages chiefly Shawanese—When lo! a runner arrived with accounts of the Shawanese towns being attacked by a body from Kentuck, they burnt five houses, killed one Indian & wounded the Chief badly—lost their own Commander *Heron* or *Herington*—they carried off 30 Horses, were pursued by fifty Shawanese, the Shawanese were beat back with loss of five & six wounded—News flew that all the Towns were to be attack'd & our little body seperated in an instant past reassembling—confusion still prevails—much counselling—no resolves—many are removing—more for peace.

The Delawares make it dangerous travelling. By this opportunity Davison & Cook return sick—Girty is flying about—McCarty stays with me with some Ottawas—these unsteady Rogues put me out of all patience.—I will go with him in a few days if nothing material occurs—See the Enemy that I may not be laugh'd at then return.—The Rebels mean I believe to destroy the Villages & corn now up—the method

troops at the Falls were in a very destitute condition, with neither supplies nor money, and their credit worn threadbare, able to get nothing from the surrounding country (*ibid.*, p. 313). In Clark's absence the colonel let his garrison be insulted by the townspeople, and so brought the soldiers into contempt, while some of the demoralized officers tampered with the public stores. It was said that much dissipation prevailed in the garrison, to which accusation Clark answered sarcastically: "However agreeable such conduct might have been to their sentiments, I believe they seldom had the means in their power, for they were generally in a starving condition" (*ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 347 and 359).

they bring their little armies into the field as follows: Every Family on the Borders receive orders to send according to their strength (one or two men) to the place of Rendezvous at a time appointed (on pain of fine or imprisonment) with fifteen or twenty days Provisions, they immediately receive their ammunition & proceed quickly to action—I am credibly inform'd by various means, that they can raise in that manner three or four thousand in a few days for such excursions —I was obliged to Kill four more Cattle for the Indians at the Mingo Town—they are always Cooking or Counselling.

I have nothing more to inform you off if anything material occurs, which I really expect in a day or two, I will inform you by Express.

I am &c HENRY BIRD.

To Capt. Lernoult.

(*Copy.*)

June 12th, Upper St. Duski.

SIR,

Couriers after Couriers arrive with accounts of the Rebels advancing to destroy the Savage Villages now all their corn is planted—

NOTE B

(State Department MSS., No. 48, vol. "Memorials &c Inhabitants of Illinois, Kaskaskias and Kentucky.")

THE Petition and Prayr. of the people of that Part of Contry [sic] now Claim'd. by the State of Virginia in the Countys of Kaintuckey and Ilinois Humbly Sheweth—That we the leige Subjects of the United States Labour under many Greivences on acount of not being formd. into a Seperate State or the Mind and Will of Congress more fully known respecting us—And we Humbly beg leave to Present to the Honorable Continental Congress our Humble Petition seting forth the Grievences and oppressions we labour under and Pray Congress may Consider Such our greivences and grant us redress.

We your Petitioners being situate in a wide Extencive Uncultivated Contry and Exposd. on every side to incursions

of the Savage Indians humbly Conceive Ourselves approssed by several acts of the general assembly of Virginia for granting large Grants for waist and unapropriated lands on the Western Waters without Reservation for Cultivating and Settling the same whereby Setling the Contry is Discouraged and the inhabitants are greatly Exposd. to the Saviges by whome our wives and Childring are daly Cruily murdered Notwithstanding our most Humble Petitions Canot Obtain Redress—By an other act we are Taxd. which in our Present Situation we Conceive to be oppresive and unjust being Taxd. with money and grain whilst Enrold and in actual Pay residing in Garrisons. We are Situate from Six Hundred to one Thousand Miles from our Present Seite of Government, Whereby Criminals are Suffered to Escape with impunity, Great numbers who ware Ocationaly absent are Deprived of an Opertunity of their Just Rights and Emprovements and here we are Obliged to Prosecute all Apeals, and whillst we remain uncertain whether the unbounded Claim of This Extencive Contry Ought of right to belong to the United States or the State of Virginia. They have by another late act required of us to Sware alegince to the State of Virginia in Particular Notwithstanding we have aredy taken the Oath of alegance to the united States. These are Greivences too Heavy to be born, and we do Humbly Pray that the Continental Congress will Take Proper Methods to form us into a Seperate State or grant us Such Rules and regulations as they in their Wisdoms shall think most Proper, During the Continuance of the Present War and your Petitioners shall ever Pray

May 15th, 1780.

[Signed]

Robert Tyler Richard Connor
Thomas Hughes Archibald McDonald
Abraham Van Meter
(and others to the number of 640).

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